GUITARS, CARS, WATCHES, WINE & THE DELUXE LIFE

GUITAR AFICIONADO

MAGAZINE

THE *ULTIMATE* LUXURY PRODUCTS GUIDE

BEST *of the* BEST

→ FROM BUGATTI *to* Z. VEX

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GEAR UP, TIME TO DIVE

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2016 CADILLAC CTS V-SPORT

+

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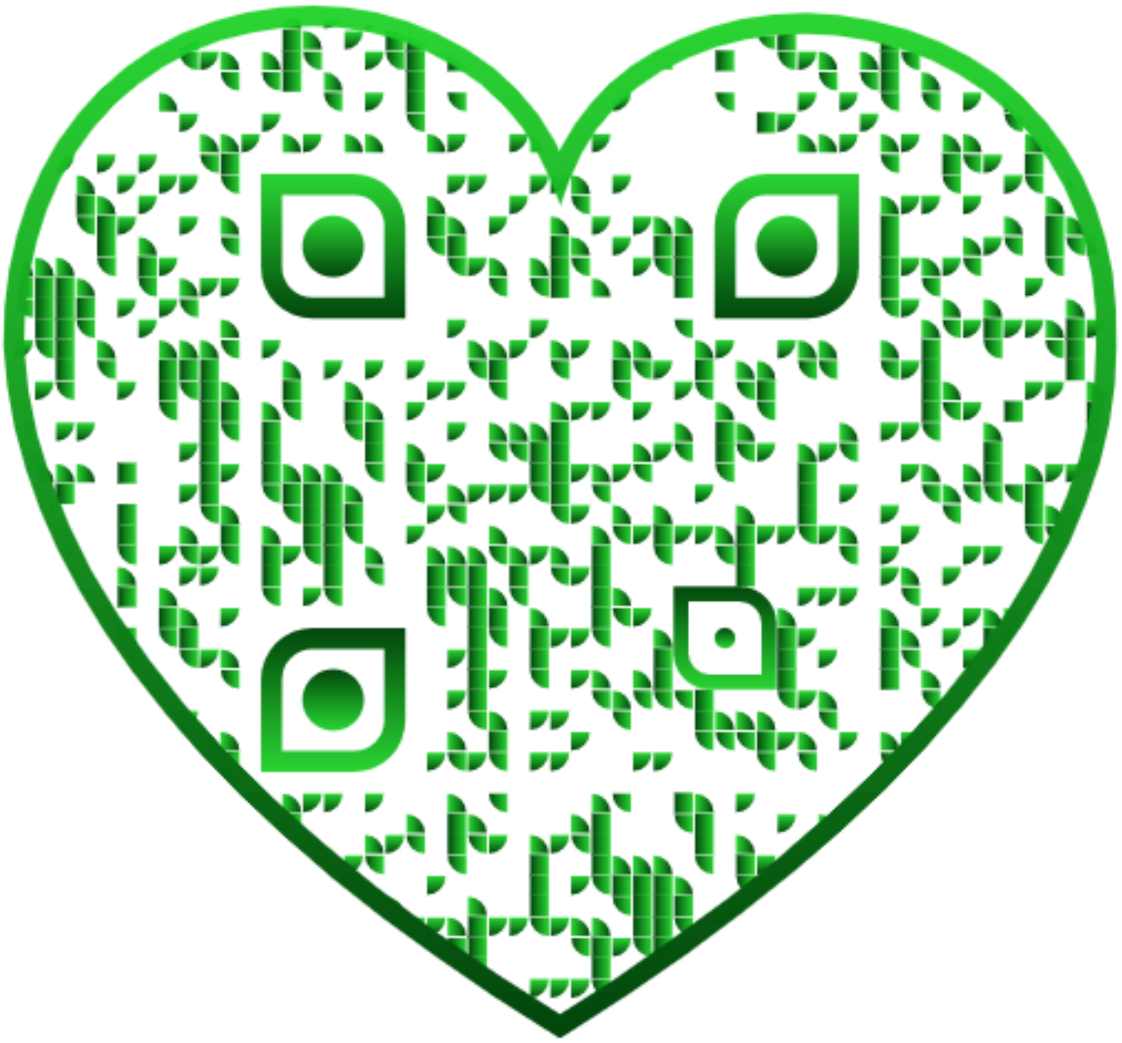
VINEYARDS AND V GUITARS

BEATLES GEAR
THREE COOL COLLECTIONS

AUCTION DAZZLERS
CELEBRITY ICONS AND VINTAGE RARITIES



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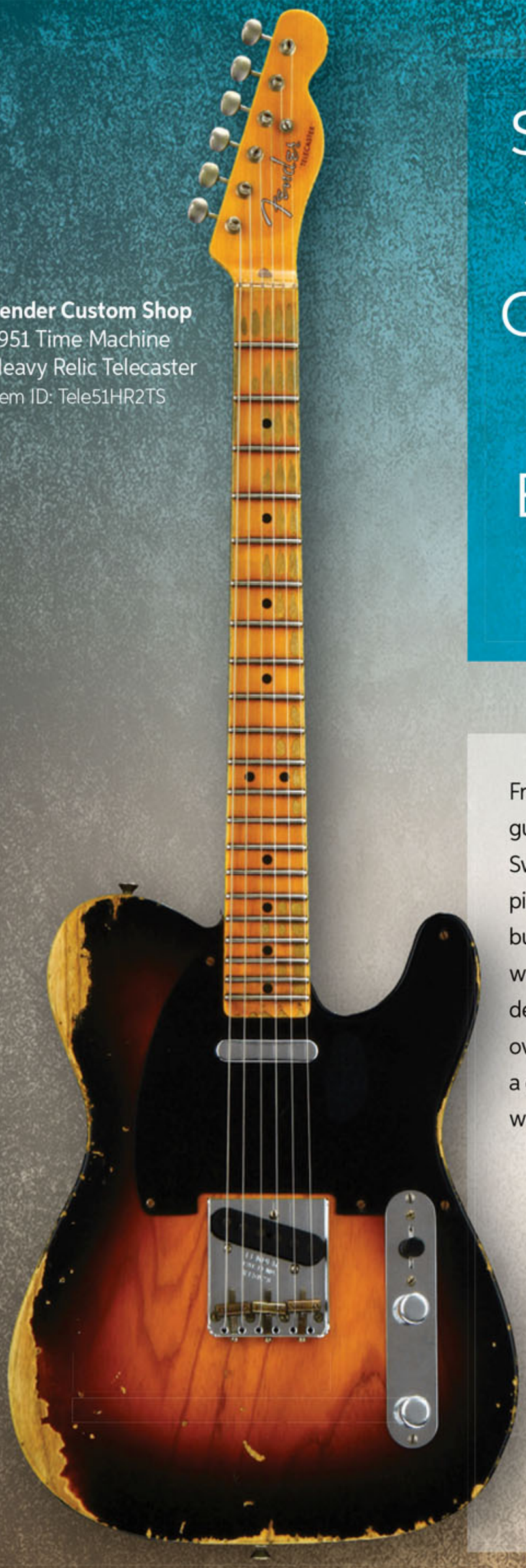
Black Sabbath's Tony Iommi and Geezer Butler take the stage in 1982.



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Letter *from the* Editor

THE WORD *ULTIMATE* gets thrown around rather carelessly these days, commonly used in advertising to hawk mundane products like fast-food cheeseburgers and video games as well as various sports (is there anything even remotely *ultimate* about ultimate Frisbee?). At *Guitar Aficionado* we've never really dwelled upon that word very much, as to us things like watches, cars, and guitars that cost more than a vacation villa are just part of our business as usual.

But when someone suggested we put together an ultimate luxury products guide, the challenge was too tempting to ignore. It was a wide-open subject, to be sure, so we decided to focus on the things that our readers have shown the most interest in over the years. Some categories, like watches, wine, and spirits, were left out because we regularly cover them, and coming to a consensus proved difficult. What we did focus on—cars, motorcycles, fashion, guitar gear, vacations, and more—gave us a chance to dig a little deeper into items that otherwise might have gotten little, if any, attention.

Beyond the guide, many subjects in this issue could qualify as *ultimate*. Foremost is Jim Irsay's collection of gear actually owned by the Beatles, which puts him in a unique position among collectors who focus on the same models of guitars played by the Fab Four. Our coverage of Guernsey's recent guitar auction includes a stunning seven-string Gibson Super 400 custom made for Tony Mottola, which to me is the ultimate Gibson archtop electric both for its rarity and celebrity pedigree (the guitar shared the stage with Frank Sinatra—the chairman of the board—after all).

But don't let all of this focus on rare and expensive items influence those of you without deep, deep pockets to think this issue isn't for you. Our reviews include the Cadillac CTS V-Sport, Asher Master Series T-Deluxe, Carr Lincoln, and Eventide H9 Max, all incredibly powerful products that provide impressive bang for the buck. And our features on Eddie Ojeda and Dave Mustaine discuss signature guitars, wines, and hot sauces that offer plenty of thrills for a smaller stack of bills.

Even if those items are beyond your means, it doesn't cost a thing to dream. I dream of one day owning a Mercedes-Benz Unimog, loading it with my family, a few cases of wine, and my favorite gear, and heading to hills to escape from the madness to a place where no one can reach me.

CHRIS GILL
Editor-in-Chief

GUITAR AFICIONADO

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(H1-4R.2.5)

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$6,900 / *clercwatches.com*

BREMONT
SUBMARINE S500
(S500/SI)

The dial serves up some delicious eye candy in the dark, where the pale-green accents emit a strong lume, especially the bezel, which is topped with a layer of sapphire crystal, an attractive feature rarely found on timepieces. The 43mm hardened-steel case is built like a tank but wears like a glove thanks to the comfortable curved lugs.

$5,400 / *bremont.com*

RESSENCE
TYPE 5
(TYPE 5BB)

The Type 5's dial is unmistakable with its array of independent rotating discs floating in an oil-filled chamber. The form is totally gonzo but also highly functional for diving. The oil makes it possible to read the dial at any angle, unlike a standard watch crystal, which reflects like a mirror underwater unless you're looking directly into the dial.

$35,800 / *ressencewatches.com*

LUMINOX
DEEP DIVE AUTOMATIC 1500
(1513)

Legibility is a diver's best friend, especially in murky waters, which is why Luminox created a unique system of lights that glow constantly to better illuminate the dials and bezels of its watches. Here, the blue dial adds a touch of fun, but the 44mm brushed-steel case is all business, with a locking crown guard and water resistance to 500 meters.

$2,100 / *luminox.com*

IWC
AQUATIMER AUTOMATIC 2000
(IW358001)

Going deep? Make a beeline for this Aquatimer and its buzz-worthy black-and-yellow color combo. Every dive watch must operate safely at a depth of roughly 1,000 feet, but that's just a dip in the kiddie pool for this model's 46mm titanium case, which can easily shoulder the intense pressure felt more than a mile underwater.

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FIT TO A T

ASHER MASTER SERIES T-DELUXE

{ BY RICHARD BIENSTOCK }

BILL ASHER BUILT his first guitar—a hand-tooled Strat-style body bolted to a Charvel replacement neck—in woodshop class at his Los Angeles high school. After graduating in 1982, he immediately set to work making a name for himself as a repairman to guitarists in the fertile L.A. music scene, eventually building up a clientele list that included the likes of Jackson Browne. By the early Nineties, Asher was running the Topanga repair shop of renowned luthier Rick Turner and working on guitars for artists like Fleetwood Mac and Crosby, Stills & Nash. In 1996, he opened up his own shop in Santa Cruz, and the following year he crafted the first instrument to bear his surname on its headstock—a lap steel for singer-guitarist, and Weissenborn enthusiast, Ben Harper.

"I had restored a few Weissenborns over the years," Asher says of the highly-sought acoustic lap steels from the Twenties and Thirties, " and [*Harper*] was looking for someone who understood them. From there, we discussed the possibility of making an electric guitar version of a Weissenborn. I built a prototype and he flipped out. He ordered a few more, and then we did a run of 70 of what was his first signature model."

While Asher today is still known for his innovative lap steels, he has since built up an impressive and diverse line of standard guitar models as well. Among these is his T-Deluxe, a single-cutaway, Tele-style instrument he first conceived in the early 2000s. "The T-Deluxe is something I wanted to develop for guys who love the simple two single-coil pickup design of a Tele but who didn't want the typical Fender Tele twang," he says. "My goal was to offer something more versatile." He achieved this goal by introducing some unique designs elements, such as including a six-position Varitone switch alongside the single volume and tone knobs, and

PHOTOGRAPHY BY MASSIMO GAMMACURTA

"IT'S FOR GUYS WHO LOVE THE TWO SINGLE-COIL DESIGN OF A TELE BUT DON'T WANT TYPICAL TELE TWANG."

designing proprietary blade pickups, in conjunction with Pete Biltoft of Vintage Vibe, for greater range.

Now, Asher has ventured even further out with the Master Series T-Deluxe model. These guitars, he says, "are built to what I feel is a more 'custom-shop' aesthetic level, with unique woods and designs, and higher-end materials." The Master Series T-Deluxe shown here boasts a swamp ash body topped with a beautifully figured piece of koa, a quartersawn rock maple neck, and an Indian rosewood fretboard. High-end appointments include celluloid tortoiseshell binding with half herringbone trim, custom-made Tone-Guard numbered volume and tone knobs, Waverly tuners with snakewood buttons, a sterling-silver pickup selector switch tip with an amber top, matching imported tortoiseshell pickguard and pickup covers;, and a Glendale Tele-style bridge with a cut treble-side sidewall.

The result is an instrument on which every aesthetic detail is carefully tended to. The same can be said for its tone. Regarding the sound of the two T-Blade pickups, Asher says, "A lot of people modify their Teles to broaden the range, so I made a bridge pickup that has fatter midrange and is honkier and bluesier sounding. And the neck has a lot of clear bell tones on that low end, with treble that stays pretty sparkly."

The six-position Varitone switch, meanwhile, "acts as a nice, subtle EQ," Asher says. "In the full clockwise position it's basically bypassed. As you click back through the other five positions, it creates almost like a wah effect—some top end comes off but the midrange increases a little bit. So even rolled back all the way the guitar doesn't get as dark or lose as much volume as it would from turning down a stock tone knob."

Asher also incorporates several other unique touches on the T-Deluxe, including a .070-thick ebony headstock faceplate ("I believe it really adds more neck sustain and strength," he says), and his practice of brushing a bit of fresh lacquer into the neck pocket before joining the neck to the body. "It's a little trick I learned from doing repairs on vintage guitars," he says. "I would notice that even after taking the screws out it was hard to get the necks off because the lacquers had melded together. So I find that adding some of my own really locks the pieces together and helps with stability."

This type of care and attention to detail extends beyond the T-Deluxe and to every facet of Asher's business. He builds roughly 70 guitars per year out of his shop, now based in Culver City, and it's a true family operation—wife Jessica handles the front-of-house business, and Asher's brother and brother-in-law join him in the shop. But even with such a modest staff and output, Asher points out that "we're doing about 11 different guitar and lap-steel models, which offers a lot of variety with very limited production. I don't do a lot of multiples of the same thing. With the Master Series, I'll probably make only about 10 or 12 a year." The T-Deluxe model, he adds, can be custom ordered, though some, like the one shown here, "are just designs and combinations that I've been inspired to do on my own."

At the end of the day, that inspiration is at the heart of Asher's work. "This is my passion, and I've been at it for over 30 years now," he says. Due to his many years of experience, he adds with a laugh, "When people walk into my shop I think they expect to see a Geppetto-type guy with glasses and a grey beard. But I started in this world when I was very young—just out of high school. And there's nothing else I've ever wanted to do since. This is my true calling."

LIST PRICES: Starting at $2,530; as shown, $5,800
Asher Guitars & Lap Steels, asherguitars.com

POWER SOUR

AMPLIFY THE AMARETTO SOUR WITH CASK-STRENGTH BOURBON

{ BY CHRIS GILL }

THE GENERIC RECIPE for an Amaretto Sour consists of just Amaretto and sweet and sour mix, and this is likely what you will get when your order the drink at 99 percent of all the gin joints in all the towns in all the world. It's a rather hideous cocktail for unsophisticated palates that is simultaneously sickly sweet and weak. The official bartender's guide recipe is not much better, replacing the sweet and sour mix with lemon juice, which significantly reduces the sweetness while throwing the sour way off balance.

I first encountered a much better version of the Amaretto Sour on the menu at Marta in Manhattan, which listed Lazzaroni Amaretto and Bourbon among its ingredients. Intrigued by the harmonious blend of flavors, I searched online for a similar recipe and immediately discovered its likely source—bartender Jeffrey Morganthaler from Portland (where else?), who also penned the excellent *The Bar Book: Elements of Cocktail Technique*. Morganthaler calls his recipe "the best Amaretto Sour in the world," and I'd have to agree.

His secret is the use of cask-strength Bourbon (specifically Booker's), which increases the alcoholic kick while also adding hints of vanilla and spice flavors that complement the sweet almond/apricot and sour citrus base. Like a good Whiskey Sour, the recipe also involves egg whites to give the drink a silky, smooth mouthfeel. The end result is a cocktail that can be enjoyed with a meal or on its own, unlike previous versions, which are more like raiding your kid's Halloween candy bag.

AMARETTO SOUR

- 1 ½ OUNCE LAZZARONI AMARETTO
- ¾ OUNCE BOOKER'S BOURBON
- 1 OUNCE FRESH LEMON JUICE
- 1 TEASPOON RICH SIMPLE SYRUP (2 PARTS SUGAR, 1 PART WATER)
- ½ OUNCE LIGHTLY BEATEN EGG WHITE
- LUXARDO MARASCHINO CHERRY AND LEMON PEEL GARNISH (OPTIONAL)

Dry shake ingredients for 10 to 15 seconds—you just want a silky texture, not a billowing, foamy head. Add cracked ice and shake well. Strain over fresh ice in an old-fashioned glass. Add garnish and serve.

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JAPANESE STEEL

MANHATTAN'S KORIN OFFERS THE WORLD'S BEST SELECTION OF MASTERPIECE KNIVES FROM JAPAN

{ BY MICHAEL COLAMECO }

BACK IN 1982, my very first job after graduating from the Culinary Institute and moving to New York City was at the legendary Four Seasons Restaurant on Park Avenue. The chef was Swiss-born legend Seppi Renggli, and his right-hand man—also Swiss—was Christian Albin, known to all of us as "Hitch." The Four Seasons is a NYC-designated interior landmark designed by Philip Johnson and Ludwig Mies Van der Rohe on the ground floor of the Seagram Building. The restaurant takes up nearly the entire first floor of the building—almost an entire city block.

At that time, a good third of the cooks working in that kitchen during the lunch shift were Japanese—a real rarity in NYC kitchens of that era. Through them I first got to work with Japanese knives that were built and felt totally different from what we Western chefs typically used (which was exclusively heavy-duty and rather cumbersome German Solingen stainless-steel knives). Every morning these cooks would come into work early prior to their shifts to sharpen their knives on large, brick-shaped water stones, while the rest of us used thinner tri-stones lubricated with sharpening oil maybe once a week. These knives were extremely sharp (partially due to the Japanese chefs' consistent attention), but they were also extremely light and much easier to articulate.

Through these Japanese chefs I also discovered a jewel of a retail store called Korin (korin.com) that, as it turns out, had just opened that same year. Founded in 1982 by Saori Kowano, a former schoolteacher who saw the opportunity to supply Japanese knives and tableware to the small but growing market at that time of sushi chefs and Japanese restaurant owners. Fast forward to 2016, and in her current knife catalog (volume 5) you'll discover over 70 pages dedicated exclusively to knives alone and another 30 pages or so of sharpening stones and accessories.

Korin's collection is enormous and includes both traditional-style Japanese blades designed for very specific tasks, including fish butchery, vegetable garnish, and general slicing, chopping, and cutting, as well as a formidable selection of beautifully hand-crafted Japanese-built "Western Style" knives. Traditional Japanese brands include Kochi, Suisin, Masamoto Sohonten, Nenonhi, and a line of knives made exclusively for Korin, while Western-style knives also include products from Mac, Masanobu, Misono, Nenox, and Togiharu.

A traditional long, slender Osaka-style "Yanagi" carbon-steel knife designed for cutting sashimi in one stroke requires the work of four craftsmen and can take up to two weeks to complete, starting with forging, tempering, quenching, edge crafting, and assembling the finished blade with the handle. The craftsmen are true artisans, using the same techniques developed over several centuries by master samurai sword makers. The investment in such a knife is significant, but with proper care these knives can last a lifetime.

If you can visit the store, on Warren Street in Tribeca, the staff is more than happy to let you handle any of the hundreds of knives they have open on display in the glass counters. If you can't make it to New York, ask them to mail you their 126-page knife catalog. Besides showing all the knives in stock at the store, it also includes many other options and makes a great coffee table display to impress your friends.

New York City–based chef and media personality Michael Colameco is the author of *Mike Colameco's Food Lover's Guide to NYC* and hosts *Colameco's Food Show* on PBS and the nationally syndicated radio program *Weekend Food*.

PHOTO COURTESY OF KORIN

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CELESTION

ROCK SHOW

JOHN VARVATOS REVEALS HIS FALL/WINTER 2016 LINE WITH A REVOLUTIONARY MULTIMEDIA EVENT.

{ BY CHRIS GILL }

INSTEAD OF PRESENTING the standard runway show to introduce his Fall/Winter 2016 collection this past February, designer John Varvatos opted for a unique multimedia presentation that, like the clothing he designs, embodies the spirit and energy of rock and roll. Featuring dramatic lighting, manikins and live models wearing animal heads, projected images, and an atmosphere that was part funhouse, part rock concert, and part haunted house, the event was a spectacle unlike anything the fashion world had experienced before.

The space where the event was held on February 2 was located around the corner from the Varvatos Bowery NYC store, which formerly was the legendary venue CBGB. Before the show, Varvatos invited guests to the event with the cryptic message, "Rock is Dead?" but when guests arrived at the venue they were greeted with a retort, painted graffiti-style on the walls, that any Who fan would appreciate: "Long Live Rock." While the spectacle was bold and innovative, the focus remained on Varvatos' latest designs, which had the rockers, fans, and fashionistas in attendance lusting for his leather jackets, boots, suits, and more.

Like the best rock music, Varvatos' new designs are timeless instead of trendy. While the usual fashion crowd and pop stars were mingling a few dozen blocks away in Midtown's boring, beige halls and tents to ogle boring, beige fashions, Varvatos proved that downtown is still the driving pulse of New York's rock and roll heart.

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MADE IN PARIS

1708 JEAN-BAPTISTE VOBOAM BAROQUE GUITAR

DURING THE MID 16TH CENTURY, the baroque guitar, strung in five courses, supplanted the Renaissance lute as the plucked string instrument of choice. It made its way from Spain and Italy into France during the following century, and among French baroque guitar makers, the Voboam family of luthiers—active between 1640 and 1730—is preeminent. This beautiful example, attributed to Jean-Baptiste Voboam, resides in the collection at the Musée de La Musique in Paris.

"The Voboam dynasty was active for almost a century in Paris," notes Musée de la Musique curator Philippe Bruguière, "and contributed to establishing the Parisian features of the baroque guitar, mainly its proportions and decorative principles."

The understated elegance of the Voboam style is readily apparent in this guitar. "The back is made of six strips of yew or cedar, separated by a three-part purfling—ebony, ivory, ebony," Bruguière explains. "The sides are in 'violette' wood [*dalbergia caerenis*] separated by ivory purfling. The soundtable is made of fine-grained spruce. The ornamentation that enhances the outline of the guitar and the soundhole is composed of an elaborate purfling and a 'pistagne' of ivory and ebony. The rose [*carved soundhole*] is filled with a three-layer gilded parchment. The neck and peg head are veneered with 'violette' wood, and there are ivory purflings on the neck. The fingerboard is ebony, and the ivory frets were fixed later. The neck is black-stained wood, and the decorative 'fleurons' are veneered with ebony."

Dated 1708, the guitar comes from the last period of the Voboam dynasty. It was originally attributed to Jean Voboam but was later discovered to be the work of Jean-Baptiste, the last of the Voboam luthiers. "Nine guitars are known from this maker," Bruguière says, "five of which are kept in museums. He also made two violas di gamba."

— Alan di Perna

PHOTO COURTESY OF MUSÉE DE LA MUSIQUE PARIS

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GOLDEN YEAR

CREEDENCE CLEARWATER REVIVAL'S MILESTONE YEAR IS CELEBRATED IN THE NEW *1969 ARCHIVE BOX*.

1969 Archive Box
Creedence Clearwater Revival
Concord Music Group ($149.98)

THE YEAR 1969 is notable for many things famous and infamous: the first Led Zeppelin album, the last Beatles album, the triumphant Apollo 11 moon landing, Woodstock, the Manson murders. It's easy to forget that the year also saw the swift and steady rise of Creedence Clearwater Revival, a quartet from El Cerrito, California, whose roots-rock music would become a defining sound of the era and a staple of rock radio to this day.

CCR were an anomaly, a rock and roll group whose music and sound drew from a southern stew of blues rock and swamp rock. Lead guitarist and songwriter John Fogerty distilled those influences into infectious pop songs that held appeal not just for rock fans but mainstream America as well. With lyrics that evoked rolling rivers, long roads, and country life, CCR songs like "Born on the Bayou," "Green River," and "Lodi" were appealingly "safe" for the masses at a time when rock music was exploring darker themes and diverging into heavy metal. Perhaps that's why this music from the end of the Sixties is as ingrained in American culture as the folk songs that inspired a music revolution at that decade's beginning.

For CCR, 1969 commenced with the January release of their sophomore album, *Bayou Country*, which included their Number Two hit "Proud Mary." Over the next 11 months, Creedence released two more Top 10 albums: *Green River*, which went to Number One, and *Willy and the Poor Boys*, which hit Number Three. The band also celebrated four hit singles and found time to record a fourth album, *Cosmo's Factory*, released in 1970. Between their recording schedules, CCR toured the U.S. extensively and headlined Woodstock's Saturday night lineup.

1969 Archive Box celebrates this moment in time with vinyl reproductions of the group's 1969 releases that are as close to the originals as possible, including misspellings, flipped A- and B-sides, and colored vinyl pressings. Available as an April 16 Record Store Day limited-edition release (visit recordstoreday.com/stores for retailers), the box also includes reproductions of three seven-inch vinyl EPs and vintage ephemera, as well as a 60-page book, making this a time capsule of Creedence Clearwater Revival's most remarkable year. —*Christopher Scapelliti*

CD/DVD

AQUALUNG
Jethro Tull
Rhino/Parlophone ($39.98; 2CD/2DVD)
Aqualung was the first Jethro Tull album remixed by Steven Wilson and was originally reissued as a 40th anniversary package in 2011. This new four-disc release features the remixes as Wilson delivered them, plus a flat transfer of the EP *Life Is a Long Song* and its companion promotional film with remixed stereo soundtrack. The set also includes, for the first time, 5.1 mixes of "Just Trying to Be," an early version of "Wind Up," and "Wond'ring Aloud, Again," as well as "Life Is a Long Song" and "Up the Pool," which were previously unavailable on CD in this form. An 80-page booklet rounds out the package.

BOOK

BOWIE
By Steve Schapiro
powerHouse Books ($40, 104 pages)
In late 1974, photographer Steve Schapiro received a rare invitation for a private photo session with David Bowie in Los Angeles. The shoot began at four in the afternoon and continued until dawn the next day. From it would come some of the most iconic images of Bowie from this period, including the photos that would grace his next two albums: *Station to Station* and *Low*. With *Bowie*, Schapiro has collected these mostly never-before-published images from the session, showing the late artist at his most creative and inspired self as he shifts his image from one photo to the next, always one step ahead of everyone else.

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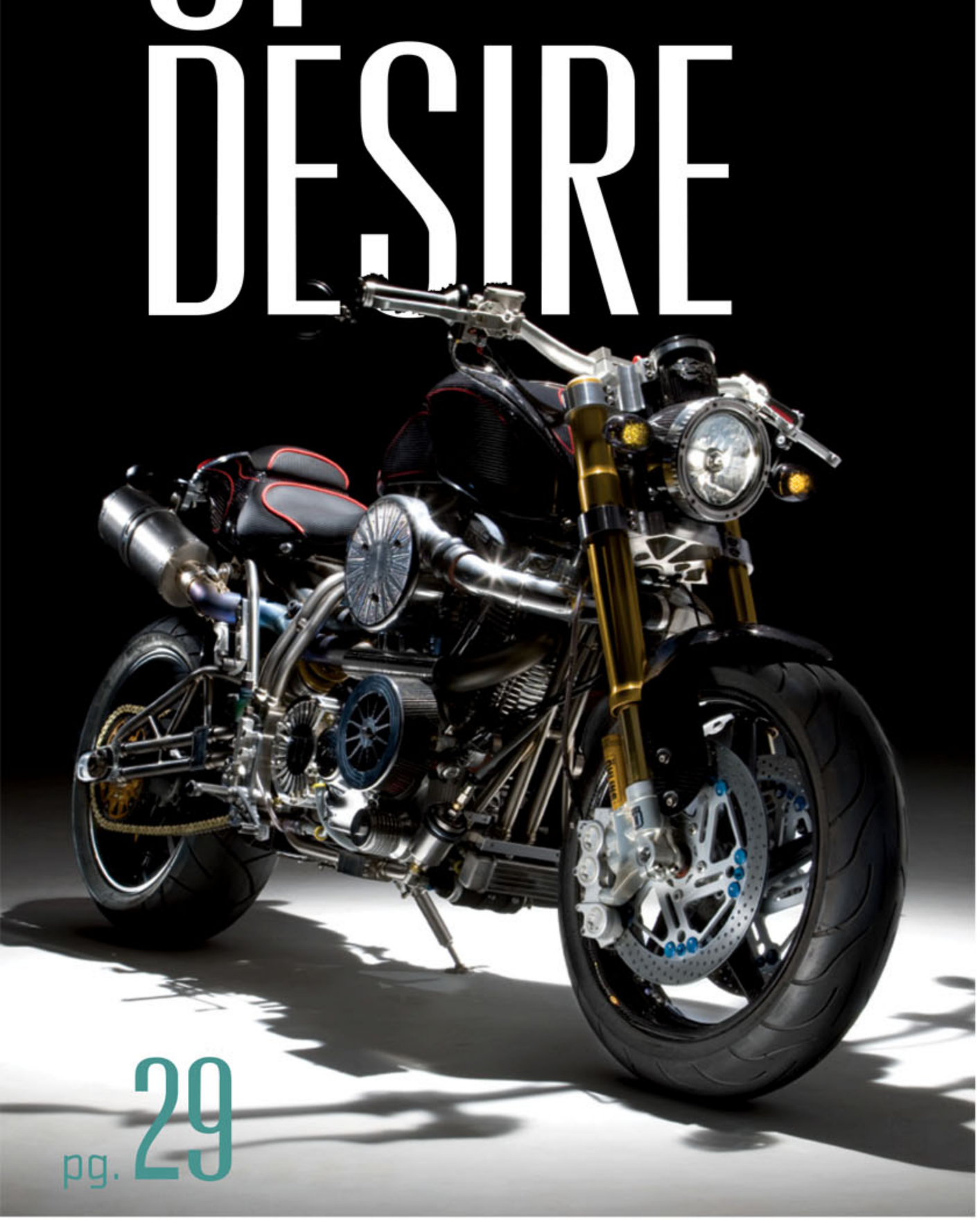
OBJECTS OF DESIRE

THE *GUITAR AFICIONADO* ULTIMATE LUXURY PRODUCTS GUIDE

BY JOE BOSSO



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pg. 34

JUST WHAT is *the ultimate*? Dictionaries posit a number of definitions, such as "the most remote in space or time" or "the last in a progression or series." But it also casts *the ultimate* as "the best or most extreme of its kind," and it is this description that holds sway over connoisseurs and aficionados of fine food, exquisite automobiles, exotic vacations, impeccable audio reproduction, and sartorial superiority.

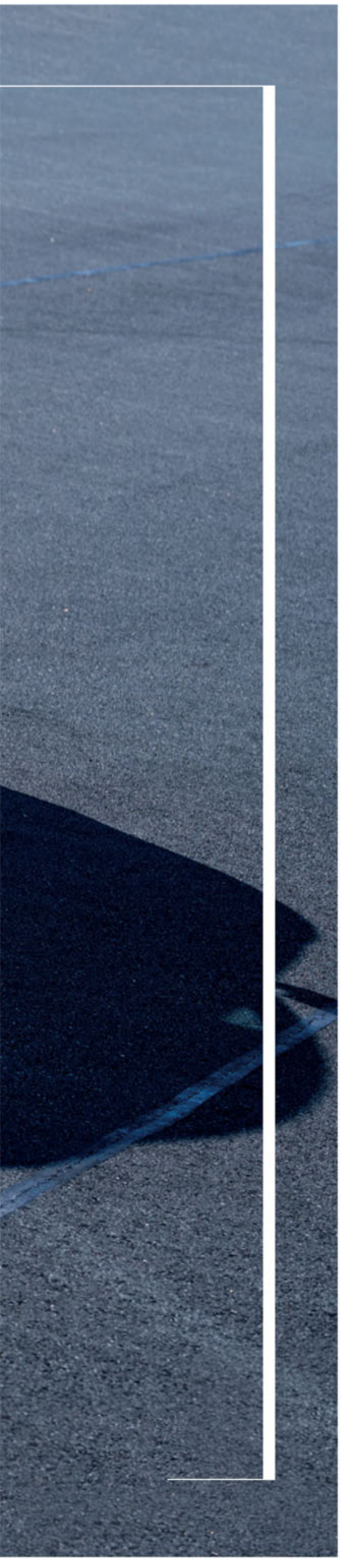
For the one percent out there who can afford a 2017 Bugatti Chiron or a 160-acre ranch at Montana's Yellowstone Club, an overarching feeling of exclusivity is certainly a key factor. But for most luxury-product enthusiasts, expert craftsmanship, daring innovation, and occasional outrageousness drives their purchases, whether it's a remarkably well-constructed guitar cable, a soundbar built from the back of a Porsche 911 GT3, or a pedal straight out of a mad scientist's laboratory. Whatever category you fit in, our Ultimate Luxury Products Guide has something for everyone.

ULTIMATE LUXURY
PRODUCTS GUIDE

ULTIMATE SPORTS CAR

2017 Bugatti Chiron

Car enthusiasts pondered how French high-performance masters Bugatti could possibly top the world's fastest auto in production, the Veyron. Now they have their answer: the Chiron. Design-wise, the vehicle borrows a few pages from the Vision Gran Turismo, but power-wise, the Chiron ups the ante on the Veyron with its quadruple-turbo 8.0-liter W-16 engine that unleashes 1,600 horsepower and in excess of 1,100 pound-feet of torque. Need some CGI-like acceleration? No problem: This four-wheel drive, seven-speed automatic takes off like a rocket, nailing 0–60 mph in two seconds flat, with a top speed estimated at 288 mph. As you might expect, all that car doesn't come cheap, and the Chiron boasts a $2.5-million price tag. But just remember the words of Bugatti president Wolfgang Dürheimer: "We want to make the best significantly better." **bugatti.com**



ULTIMATE OFF-ROAD VEHICLE

Mercedes-Benz Unimog U 4023 – U 5023

The Mercedes-Benz Unimog is best known as the off-road vehicle of choice for the German Army as well as an industrial-strength workhorse for many European emergency services. Normally designed for transporting road crews, hauling snowplows and tractors, fighting forest fires, and performing rescue missions in all kinds of the most unthinkably perilous conditions, the Unimog U 4023 and it's bigger, badder brother, the U 5023, are also favored by off-road enthusiasts who prefer to drive up and down 45-degree inclines and through four-foot-deep streams instead of going around them. Getting a new Unimog in the United States is no small task, but it's worth the effort and cost (prices start around $250,000) if you're looking for the ultimate doomsday getaway vehicle. Power-wise, this badass beast is fired by a 5.1-liter, four-cylinder turbo-diesel engine with 231 horsepower and 661 pound-feet of torque that allows for a top speed of 56 mph both forward and backward (should you need to reverse tracks in a hurry). The flexible ladder-type frame is no sissy: the U 5023 can handle a maximum axle payload of 14.5 tons, while the U 4023 can

support a still-impressive 10.3 tons. A central tire inflation system even lets drivers instantly adjust optimum tire pressure for "road," "sand," and "bad road." We're guessing "bad road" to the Unimog involves flames, spikes, and seething hordes of the undead. **mercedes-benz.co.uk**

ULTIMATE MOTORCYCLE *Ecosse Moto Works Founder's Edition Titanium XX*

So your buddy just loves to brag about his Ecosse Titanium Series RR motorbike–you know, the one that set him back $275,000. Fix his little red wagon but good with the new, beyond-spiffy Founder's Edition Titanium XX. The final bike in the Denver-based company's Heretic Series goes for a whopping $300,000, and it's stocked with everything you could want in an upscale thrill ride: The bike's titanium chassis is a thing of beauty that takes a team of elite machinists more than 1,280 hours to assemble. Its American V-twin supercharged and intercooled engine produces a stunning 225 horsepower and 210 pound-feet of torque at the rear wheel. Other features include a variable fuel-injection system with altitude compensation, fully adjustable Ohlins MotoGP-grade TTX fluted gas forks with titanium front axle, ISR custom radial brake system with carbon ceramic discs, and analog tachometer with a programmable LCD speedometer. Without a doubt, this bike is equally at home on the open road or inside a museum.
ecossemoto.com

ULTIMATE GETAWAY

Yellowstone Club

Does city life have you feeling boxed in? Perhaps you fancy a five- to 15-million-dollar condo at Montana's most exclusive ski area, the Yellowstone Club? Or if you need to stretch out even more—say on your very own 160-acre ranch—the Yellowstone Club can fix you up with your own spread to the tune of $18 to $21 million. Whichever home you choose (and there's more than a dozen other custom residencies available, ranging from six- to 19-million dollars), you're guaranteed to wake up each morning to some of the most gorgeous scenery imaginable. Whether you want to gaze out at a tranquil native trout stream or marvel at the majestic Lone Peak, Pioneer, or Cedar Mountains, it's all here. The 13,600-acre club offers some of the best skiing in the country (three different lodges, 15 chairlifts) and a stunning 18-hole golf course designed by famed PGA veteran Tom Weiskopf. There are also seven different dining outlets, state-of-the-art spas, pools, tennis courts, riding ranges, a movie theater, and a whole lot more. It's a complete luxury living experience away from it all. **yellowstoneclub.com**

ULTIMATE MEN'S FRAGRANCE

Clive Christian No. 1

In 1999, Clive Christian acquired one of the oldest British perfume houses, the Crown Perfumery, and since then he's created the ultimate in luxury scents using only exotic, natural ingredients. At $865 for a 1.6-ounce bottle, his latest creation, No. 1, is recognized by the *Guinness Book of World Records* as the world's most expensive perfume. An oriental-ambery fragrance, No. 1 is comprised of top notes of bergamot, lime, Sicilian mandarin, cardamom, nutmeg, and thyme; heart notes of lily of the valley, rose, jasmine, ylang-ylang, and heliotrope; and base notes of cedarwood, sandalwood, vetiver, ambery woods, and vanilla. Sophisticated, distinctive and wickedly sexy, No. 1 is designed for men, but like all Clive Christian scents, it's categorized as unisex so anyone can smell like a dream. **clive.com**

ULTIMATE SUIT

Alexander Amosu Bespoke Suits

If you're dreaming of walking into that board meeting decked out in your Alexander Amosu Vanquish II bespoke suit (you know, the one you paid $100,000 for), you're out of luck: Only one such suit, made from rare vicuña and qiviut and featuring nine 18-carat gold and diamond buttons, was created, and it was delivered to its buyer in an armored van. But that doesn't mean you can't commission the high-end British tailor to create your very own bespoke masterpiece. Amosu craftsmen first slip you into a "skeleton" suit, and once you choose your fabric, they meticulously assemble the garments to your exact specifications, personally delivering their work to you six weeks later. Expect to hear the phrase "it suits you" often. **alexanderamosu.co.uk**

ULTIMATE BLAZER

Ralph Lauren Purple Label Savile Row Cashmere Blazer

Looking for a timeless, classic way to "look sharp"? Whether paired with dress trousers or Ralph Lauren jeans, the Savile Row Cashmere Blazer from Ralph Lauren's Purple Label collection ($4,695– $4,995) is perfect for just about any occasion. Available in royal navy, it's made in Italy from luxurious, 100-percent cashmere and finished with genuine horn buttons. Other features include notched lapels, a two-button silhouette, a welt pocket at the left chest, and a vented back hem.
RALPHLAUREN.COM

ULTIMATE CRUISE

Silversea World Cruise

If you've got three months free and a cool $193,950 lying around, why not see the world in style aboard the Silver Whisper ocean liner? The Silversea World Cruise for 2017 covers 25 countries and 92 ports, starting in San Francisco and winding up in Monte Carlo 116 days later. An Owner's Suite gives you all the benefits of a luxury apartment, including butler service, two twin beds or a queen-sized bed, a living room with a separate sitting area, a marbled bathroom with a double vanity, walk-in wardrobes and a personal safe, and just about any other amenity you can imagine, including a private teak veranda so you can admire the ocean view just by stepping outside your door. You can even enjoy dinner at the officer's table. Business Class airfare is available, and of course there's complimentary unlimited Wi-Fi (so you can log on to *Guitar Aficionado* anytime and anywhere). **silversea.com**

ULTIMATE LUXURY
PRODUCTS GUIDE

ULTIMATE EFFECT PEDAL

Z. Vex Candela Vibrophase

Zachary Vex, founder of and official mad scientist for Z. Vex Effects, has created some of the most out-there, brilliant, and brilliantly named guitar effects pedals over the past 20 years. But he's outdone even himself with his $5,900 steam-punk stomp-box creation called the Candela Vibrophase. Give him this: Nobody else has a lock on the claim of making "the world's first candle-powered guitar effects pedal." That's right—a single tea candle with a burning time of approximately five hours illuminates two solar cells that power a Stirling engine, which in turn drives a flywheel that spins an oscillating optical disc. Interrupted light sends tremolo through the Vibrophase, its intensity and speed controlled by a neodymium sphere magnet. If it's all very Wile E. Coyote–sounding, we should stress that it does indeed work. According to Vex, it's the first modulation effect "that makes the amp sound like it's floating around spinning." Given that the prototype recently displayed at the NAMM Show took 77 hours to build, don't expect Candela Vibrophases to roll off the assembly line. But that gives you enough time to count your pennies. **ZVEX.COM**

ULTIMATE SOUNDBAR

Porsche Design 911 GT3 Soundbar

If you've always dreamed of looking at the back of your car while listening to your favorite tunes, the Porsche Design 911 GT3 Soundbar (priced at $3,500) is just for you. Consider it the ultimate conversation piece: An actual rear silencer and twin tailpipes from a 911 GT3 that's been converted into a 2.1 virtual surround-system subwoofer boost. Measuring 29-by-11-by-12.5 inches and weighing approximately 42 pounds, the 200-watt speaker accepts audio from Bluetooth devices or one analog and two digital inputs. Other features include bass and treble controls, Dolby digital decoding, and a LipSync function for precise voice synchronization with video playback systems. The results are deep, low, and throaty—just what one would expect from a Porsche. **porsche-design.com**

ULTIMATE TURNTABLE

Transrotor Artus FMD Turntable

Whether you listen to Brahms or the Beatles, blues or Norwegian black metal, odds are you're spinning a lot more vinyl than you did five years ago. At a cost of $132,000, the German-made Transrotor Artus FMD ranks as the most expensive turntable in the world. Described as "a Rolex built into a turntable," it has an eye-catching, museum-worthy design, and it's a hefty piece of equipment, too, tipping the scales at 485 pounds and measuring four feet high and five feet in circumference. Features include self-leveling "cardanic suspension," a solid aluminum/acrylic body, free-magnet drive and platter weight, as well as three separate motors that keep discs from coming in contact with even the slightest vibration, ensuring the purest sonic experience around.

transrotor.de

ULTIMATE GUITAR

Gibson "Eden of Coronet" SG

Most guitars that command record-setting prices usually do so because of who played them. Last year, however, Gibson's "Eden of Coronet" was crowned "the world's most valuable guitar" by the *Guinness Book of World Records* the second it came off the luthier's bench and before anyone so much as played an E chord on it. What accounts for this white SG's two-million-dollar price tag? Almost the entire surface of the body's top is covered in about 400 carats of diamonds, and more than three-and-a-half pounds of 18k white gold adorn the instrument. The "Eden of Coronet" is a three-way collaboration between musician-designer Mark Lui, Coronet jewelry designer Aaron Shum, and Gibson. Lui stated that he blinged out the SG to accentuate the feminine quality of the instrument. And the way we hear it, diamonds are still a girl's best friend.

Gibson.com, coronetdiamonds.com

ULTIMATE GUITAR CABLE

Morrow Audio Phoenix Guitar Cable

To many guitarists the idea of spending 700 bucks on a guitar cable might strike them as foolhardy. But think about it: You've already forked over thousands of dollars on that high-end guitar and probably several thousand more on a boutique amp. To paraphrase a famous saying, a signal chain is only as strong as its weakest link, so why compromise your first-class tone with a budget guitar cable? The Morrow Audio Phoenix cable is pro audio all the way, delivering "pure tone" via the finest conductor material around—two runs of shielded solid-core, insulated silver-coated copper wire—to provide the truest sound of your rig. Custom lengths are available, but the basic Phoenix cable is 12 feet and it comes with either a straight- or right-angle "silent" plug to avoid speaker damage when you unplug from a live amp. **morrowaudio.com**

ULTIMATE LUXURY PRODUCTS

ULTIMATE HUMIDOR

Imperiali Geneve Emperador Humidor

Don't even think of putting a Tiparillo in the same zip code as Imperiali Geneve's Emperador humidor. Of course, if you can afford its one-million-dollar price tag, no doubt your stash runs along the line of Arturo Fuente Opus Xs. The centerpiece of the Emperador is the tourbillion timepiece on top of the case, constructed from 300 pieces (the whole case has 2,600 separate components), but there's also a Swiss-made guillotine cutter and punch, a gold-wrapped table light, a motor-driven intelligent ashtray, and the world's first relative-humidity regulation system (guaranteeing a temperature between 60- to 64-degrees F). The Emperador comes stocked with two-dozen gold-wrapped Grand Crus, so you can celebrate your hot new purchase in style right away. IMPERIALI-GENEVE.COM

ULTIMATE STEAK

Boucherie Polmard Rib Steak

If you've ever visited Beefsteak Charlie's, Sizzler, or Tad's Steaks more than once, you may want to avert your eyes, but if you demand the finest beef known to humanity, the 2000-vintage cote de boeuf at Boucherie Polmard will certainly be your idea of meat-lover's heaven. And hopefully you've got a rockin' expense account, as Alexander Polmard's famed rib steak commands as much as $3,200. The breed of cattle that Polmard raises, the Blonde Aquintaine, is said to rival Black Angus and Kobe beef, and the butcher-farmer-breeder raises his livestock on a farm outside of Saint Mihiel in the Meuse region of Lorraine in northeastern France. Polmard even talks to the cows daily to ensure a stress-free existence until their inevitable end. From there, through a process called "hibernation," the meat is preserved indefinitely with cold air blowing at speeds of 120 kilometers per hour in a -43-degrees Celsius environment. Ecstatic epicureans rave about the steak's smooth acidity and butter-like texture. Knives are, apparently, optional. **polmard.com**

ULTIMATE GRILL

Kalamazoo Gourmet K1000HS Hybrid Fire Freestanding Grill with Side Burner

Let's face it: If you have $35,000 to invest on a gas grill, chances are you're not slapping Ballpark Franks on your spiffy new Kalamazoo Hybrid. You're treating your guests to striped bass caught from your private marina or Boucherie Polmard's vintage cote de boeuf. The Kalamazoo Hybrid Fire K1000HS allows budding Bobby Flays to cook with gas, wood, and charcoal interchangeably or in any combination, so you can barbeque low and slow or sear that sucker with 1,000-degree heat. Its four cast-brass primary burners provide up to 110,000 BTUs with natural gas, the grilling surface measures a generous 46x22 inches, and the motor-driven rotisserie system features two infrared burners. The Kalamazoo Hybrid Fire has been called "the Rolls-Royce of grills," and we're guessing it wouldn't look bad parked next to your actual first-class ride. **kalamazoogourmet.com**

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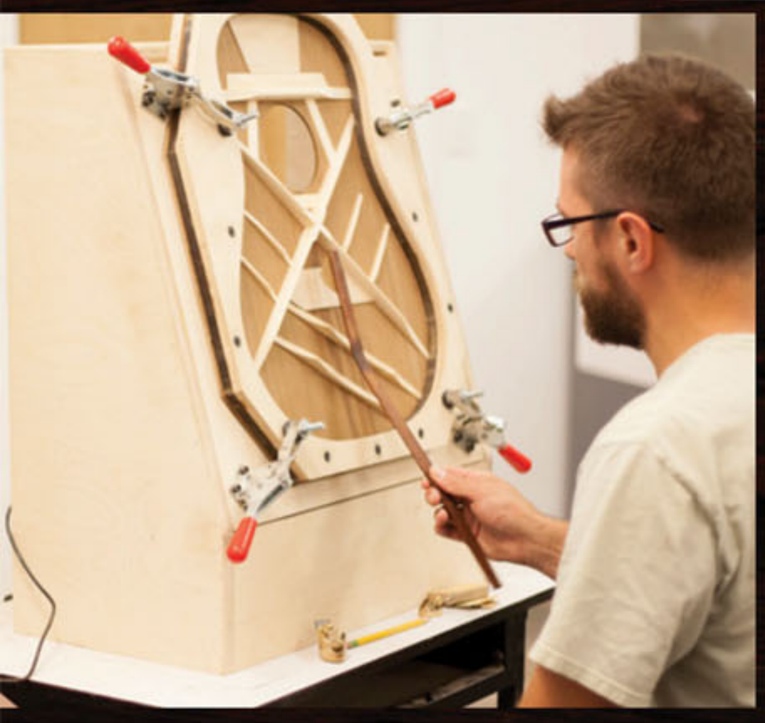

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THE
BEATLES

IN SEARCH OF THE SECRETS BEHIND THE **FAB FOUR**'S SOUND, **BEATLES** COLLECTORS DISCOVER THE MAGIC OF THE GENUINE INSTRUMENTS.

Every Little Thing

BY DAN EPSTEIN

"THERE ARE ONLY FOUR PEOPLE WHO KNEW WHAT THE BEATLES WERE ABOUT ANYWAY," PAUL McCARTNEY ONCE SAID. AND WHILE IT'S CERTAINLY CORRECT THAT ONLY MACCA, RINGO STARR, AND THEIR LATE MATES JOHN LENNON AND GEORGE HARRISON COULD EVER TRULY UNDERSTAND WHAT IT WAS LIKE TO BE AT THE CENTER OF THEIR MUSICAL WHIRLWIND, THAT HASN'T STOPPED SEVERAL GENERATIONS OF MUSIC LOVERS FROM TRYING.

Books, documentaries, reissued albums, archived interviews, and so on, all offer clues to what it was like to have been a Beatle. But there are some folks who believe that in order to fully grasp the essence of their enduring music, you must grasp the same instruments they used to create it. Here, then, are three men from three very different walks of life, united by their obsession with collecting Beatles-specific instruments.

THE **NFL** OWNER

PHOTOS BY POLINA OSHEROV

WHILE DOZENS OF collectors focus on acquiring Beatles-related instruments, Jim Irsay—irrepressible owner of the Indianapolis Colts and avowed Beatles obsessive—takes it to a whole other level: He collects instruments actually *played* by the Beatles. Beatles-owned instruments aren't the only things Irsay collects—he owns more than 175 historic guitars, including Jerry Garcia's Doug Irwin Tiger and Bob Dylan's 1964 Fender Stratocaster from his "electric" debut at the 1965 Newport Folk Festival—but they certainly are the focus and driving force of his impressive collection.

Of course, you need especially deep pockets to afford these kinds of hallowed artifacts. Irsay made headlines this past December when he bought Ringo Starr's 1963 Ludwig black oyster pearl three-piece drum kit for $2.2 million at auction. The purchase was a nice capper to a year that also saw him snag Les Paul's 1954 Custom "Black Beauty" for $335,000, Lennon's 1963 Gretsch 6120 Chet Atkins (purchased from Lennon's cousin David Birch for $530,000), and the bass drum head used by Starr during the Beatles' 1964 U.S. performances, which alone cost him $2.125 million.

In addition, last year Irsay paid $910,000 for Lennon's 1964 Rickenbacker 325 Fireglo, also known as the Rose-Morris "Beatle Backer" after the British distributor that commissioned six models from the U.S. guitar maker in 1964. Lennon bought the guitar in late 1964 as a temporary replacement for his damaged black 1964 Rickenbacker 325 and played it at Beatles Christmas shows that holiday season. He gave the Fireglo 325 to Starr in 1968 to cheer him up during the tense sessions for the White Album.

Irsay made his first major Beatles instrument purchase in 2004, when he bought George Harrison's 1964 Gibson SG Standard at auction for $567,000. Harrison played the guitar on recording sessions from 1966 through 1969 and in promo clips for "Paperback Writer" and "Rain." He later gave it to Badfinger guitarist Pete Ham, who played it on the group's hits "Baby Blue," "No Matter What," and "Day After Day." But documentation that Lennon had also played the guitar during the White Album sessions made the purchase especially appealing to Irsay.

"John is Jim's guy in the Beatles," says Chris McKinney, the curator of Irsay's guitar collection. "Even though he grew up in football, Jim has always seen himself as the rebel. And in the Beatles, John Lennon was the rebel, so that's always been his hero. He generally comes to the Colts' Halloween parties as John Lennon."

Other Beatles-owned guitars in Irsay's collection are Harrison's Harptone 12-string, which was used by the guitarist and members of Badfinger on the *All Things Must Pass* album ("It's the guitar you hear on the intro to 'My Sweet Lord,'" McKinney says), and a 1966 Vox Kensington prototype guitar, whose outlandishly shaped hollow mahogany body was fitted with push buttons that activated various sonic effects. Vox presented the guitar to the Beatles in 1967, and both Harrison and Lennon played it during the *Magical Mystery Tour* sessions, though it was never actually used on a Beatles track. Lennon later gave it as a birthday present to "Magic Alex" Mardas, the self-styled electronics wizard who ingratiated himself into the Beatles' inner circle during their psychedelic period. Irsay bought the guitar at auction in 2013 for $408,000.

While Irsay's ultimate "Holy Grail" is Lennon's original 1958 Rickenbacker 325, which currently resides in the collection of Sean Lennon, McKinney says the Colts owner would also dearly love to add a McCartney-owned bass to his collection. After all, he's got Ringo's drums, John's "Beatle Backer," and George's SG, so a bass from Paul would complete an instrumental Beatles "reunion" of sorts.

"Jim hasn't revealed the full extent of his plans to me," McKinney says, "but he's mentioned that he'd like to have some sort of party where he'd get all the instruments together and get one of the best Beatles tribute bands to perform on them. When I was at the auction for Ringo's drum head, I had Jim on the phone while it was going on, and that was his line throughout the auction—'Man, we're putting the band back together!' So that's kind of become his mantra."

(above, L-R) 1966 Vox Kensington, Lennon's 1964 Rickenbacker 325, Starr's 1964 bass drum head, Harrison's 1964 Gibson SG, Lennon's 1963 Gretsch 6120; (right) Lennon's 1964 "Beatle Backer" 325.

(top) Haines with 1962 Gibson J-160E; (middle) Haines discusses a rare 1965 Shea Stadium performance photo; (bottom) A Gallotone Champion (front) among Beatles-related rarities.

PHOTOS BY SEAN MURPHY

THE **MOTORCYCLE** RACER

CHRIS HAINES DOESN'T gig with his guitars, but he often ushers visitors to his home in Palm Springs, California into his music room, where he'll give them a tour of Beatles guitar history and maybe invite them to jam with the instruments as well.

A semi-retired motorcycle racer with 15 Baja 1000 wins to his credit, Haines—a member of the Off-Road Motorsports Hall of Fame—now runs companies that offer motorcycle tours of Baja and Las Vegas and provide off-road vehicle training for Special Ops troops. But in his spare time, he likes to deeply immerse himself in the Beatles' music, whether by cranking 200-gram vinyl pressings of their albums on his old-school tube stereo system or by collecting and playing period-correct Beatles-related instruments.

"Because I've been involved with racing, I'm kind of an equipment person," he explains. "I've loved the Beatles since I was a kid, but about 15 years ago I started getting really interested in what kind of equipment they used to make that magic."

Haines' collection reads like a roll-call of iconic Beatles instruments: There's a 1965 Rickenbacker 360-12, a 1964 Sonic Blue Fender Strat, a 1964 Gibson SG Standard, a 1969 Fender Rosewood Telecaster, a 1966 Rickenbacker 325, a 1965 Epiphone Casino, multiple Gretsches (a 1957 Duo Jet, a 1962 6120, a 1963 Country Gentleman, and a 1964 Tennessean), a 1964 Framus Hootenanny 12-string (like the one Lennon used to record "It's Only Love" and "You've Got to Hide Your Love Away"), and a 1962 Gibson J-160E acoustic-electric. "Gibson made only 134 J-160E guitars that year," says Haines. "I've read that Harrison and Lennon used those guitars for recording more than any other instrument, which makes this one really special for me." For good measure, he also has a 1965 Vox Continental organ (like

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(left) Haines with Harrison-related guitars—a Rickenbacker 360-12 and Strat painted to match Harrison's psychedelic finish; (below) Gretsches. Ricks, and more.

the one Lennon ran his elbows up and down at Shea Stadium), a 1964 Vox AC30 amplifier, and a 1965 Vox Super Beatle, all of which are maintained in excellent working order.

But for Haines, the most magical instruments in his collection are the ones linked to the Beatles' formative years, like his 1958 Hofner Club 40, the model that was Lennon's first electric guitar. "I really love that Hofner Club," Haines says. "Of course, when John got his first Rickenbacker, McCartney started playing that same guitar upside-down until he moved over to bass. So I think that guitar is pretty important. It took me 10 years to track one down!"

Haines cites two guitars as the most important instruments in his collection: his 1956 Gallotone Champion and 1956 Zenith Model 17 acoustics. Lennon ordered his Gallotone through a newspaper ad when he was 16 years old, and the one in Haines' collection actually clocked time at Mendips, the Liverpool home where Lennon spent much of his childhood with his Aunt Mimi—though the guitar moved in well after the Beatle moved out. "My Gallotone was owned by a guy in Liverpool, who had it on loan for a while to the John Lennon boyhood home museum," Haines says. "I have paperwork from the National Trust showing that it sat in John's bedroom for a while!"

"BECAUSE I'VE BEEN INVOLVED WITH RACING, I'M KIND OF AN EQUIPMENT PERSON."

The Zenith is identical to McCartney's first acoustic guitar, including one very impressive detail. "Paul's father had given him a trumpet, and he went down to Hessy's Music Centre and traded it for that guitar," Haines explains. "The guitar I have came from Liverpool, and it has an old Hessy's sticker on the back of the headstock. It came from the same shop that McCartney's came from.

"When I look at those two instruments, I'm basically looking at the start of the Beatles," he continues with audible awe. "It really doesn't get much better than that!"

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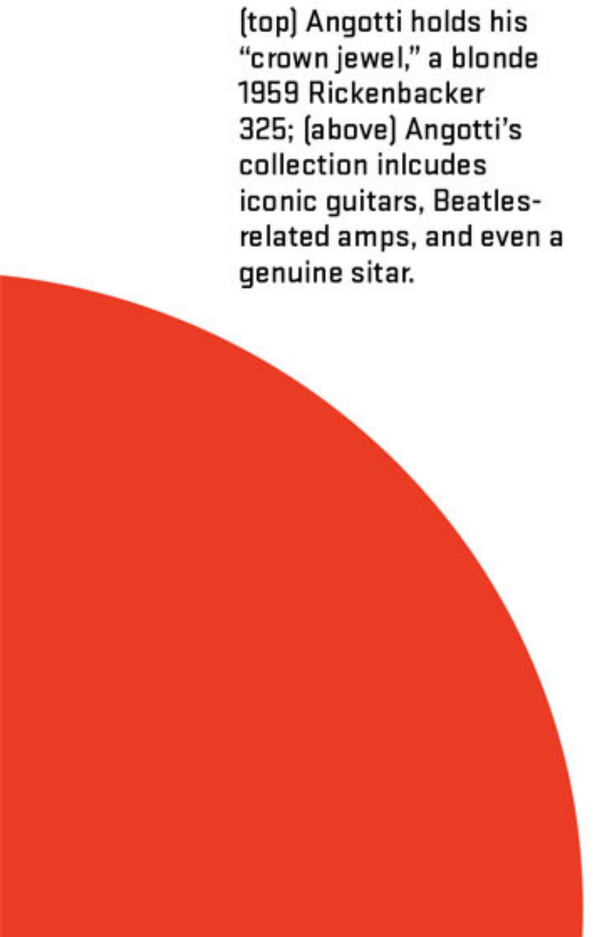

PHOTOS BY BRIAN SORG

(top) Angotti holds his "crown jewel," a blonde 1959 Rickenbacker 325; (above) Angotti's collection inlcudes iconic guitars, Beatles-related amps, and even a genuine sitar.

THE **MUSICIAN**

PHIL ANGOTTI FIRST caught Beatlemania when he was just a toddler. "I don't remember seeing the Beatles on *Ed Sullivan*, because I was only two and a half at the time," says Angotti, co-owner of Chicago's Avenue N Guitars. "But my mom told me many times that I was dancing around the room while they were playing."

Angotti, a singer, songwriter, and guitarist who has been active on the Chicago music scene since the late Seventies with such melodic guitar-pop acts as the Fleas, the Scuffle, the Idea, and the Beatle Brothers (a long-running duo with local singer Jay Gueppner), remains entranced by the Beatles—and by their instruments. He's been buying Rickenbacker guitars since 1980, and his collection now numbers in the double digits, including several Ricks similar in model, color, and era to ones actually played by the Beatles. They include a 1969 325 Jetglo ("A rare color, and basically the same as John's '64 325," Angotti explains), a 1967 325 Fireglo (a slightly younger lookalike of the 1964 "Beatle Backer" model that Lennon later gave to Ringo), and a 1967 360-12 similar to Harrison's 1965 Rickenbacker 12-string.

But the "crown jewel" of Angotti's Rickenbacker collection is a 1959 blonde 325. Originally a two-pickup 315 model, the guitar was later fitted with a middle pickup and a Bigsby vibrato, making it about as close a cousin to Lennon's modified 1958 325 as you're likely to find outside of a museum. "Rickenbacker made only 10 315 guitars in 1959," says Angotti, who purchased this one from a private collector in 2008. "This is one of only four natural-finish 315s made in 1959, and the other six were Autumnglo."

Angotti's arsenal of Beatles-related guitars includes a black 1955 Gretsch Duo Jet (Harrison had a 1957), a 1966 Gretsch Country Gentleman with a walnut finish (Harrison owned two 1963s), a 1964 Hofner 500/1 sunburst bass made just months after McCartney's 1963 version, a 1961 Gibson J-160E acoustic built just months before the early 1962 models owned by Harrison and Lennon, a 1966 Epiphone Texan similar to McCartney's 1964 model, a sunburst 1964 Epiphone Casino (Lennon had a '65), and a 1964 Gretsch Tennessean with the same rare "dark cherry" finish as the one of uncertain vintage that Harrison began playing in late 1963.

He also owns a few that are exactly like ones played by the Beatles: a 1963 Gibson ES-345 sunburst, as used by Harrison on tour and in several promo clips in late 1965; an orange 1964 Gretsch 6120 Chet Atkins that's a dead-ringer for the one Lennon briefly owned and gave to his cousin David Birch; and a 1965 Epiphone Casino honeyburst with a Bigsby, as used by Harrison on the band's final 1966 tour and on *Revolver* and *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band*. "I also used to have a 1969 rosewood Telecaster like the one George played on the roof in *Let It Be*," he says. "I kind of regret selling it, but it was *really* heavy to play."

And play them he actually does. Though many collectors would likely lock such precious axes away, Angotti believes in regularly putting them through their paces, both in the studio and in concert. "There's something about the materials and the way they were made. They just sound *right* in a way that the reissues never quite manage," he says. "I want the audiences I play for to enjoy them as much as I do." GA

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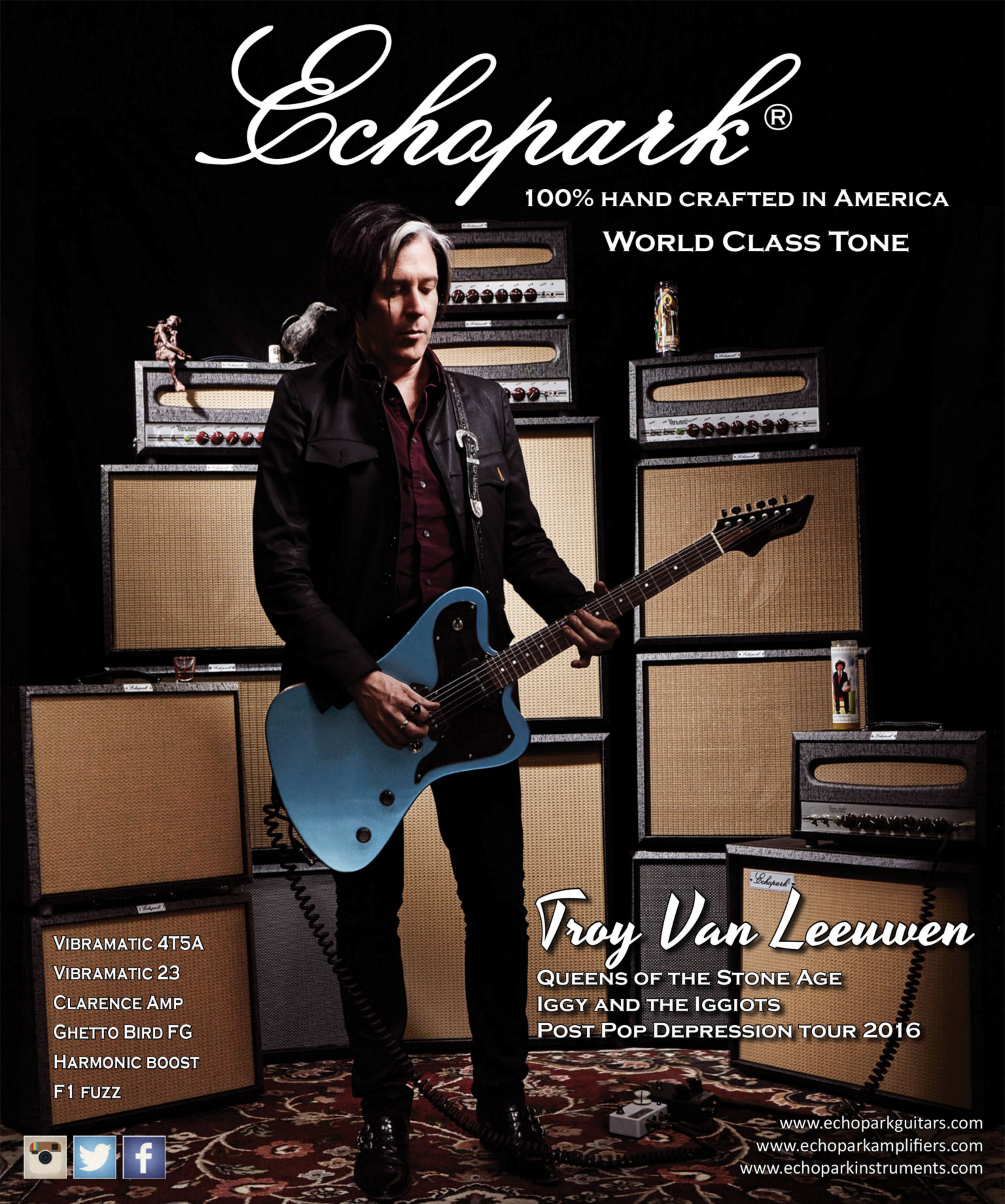

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The Fire Still Burns

WITH HIS NEW LINE OF HOT SAUCES AND UPCOMING D'ANGELICO SIGNATURE MODEL GUITAR, EDDIE OJEDA LOOKS FORWARD TO LIFE BEYOND TWISTED SISTER.

By Richard Bienstock

PHOTOGRAPHY BY JUSTIN BORUCKI

THE D'ANGELICO SHOWROOM booth at the Winter National Association of Music Merchants (NAMM) convention—the world's largest annual gathering of musical instrument and gear manufacturers—in Anaheim, California, this past January immediately confronted visitors with several things that seem incongruous with the most storied name in archtop building. For starters, there was an abundance of slick, shiny, and very obviously solid-bodied guitars lining the walls. Then there was the man playing one of these modern electrics on a small stage located toward the back of the room: Eddie Ojeda.

The 60-year-old Ojeda, in glasses and a sleeveless shirt and sporting a long, thick mane of jet-black hair, is best known as the lead guitarist for mascara-clad Eighties glam-metal act Twisted Sister. He's without a doubt a talented and accomplished musician. To the former, as a youngster in New York City he took classical guitar lessons from a teacher who had studied under Segovia. To the latter, Twisted Sister have sold millions of records over the course of their roughly 40-year career, and their biggest hit, the 1984 anthem "We're Not Gonna Take It," is an instantly recognizable pop-culture touchstone, most recently having been used and abused by Donald Trump as a campaign rally song.

Onstage in the D'Angelico showroom, Ojeda is playing a beautiful SD single-cut model sporting the trademark bull's-eye finish (initially made famous in the "We're Not Gonna Take It" music video) and ripping through some of his band's old tunes. The room is packed with fans, clearly more of a Twisted Sister than traditional-archtop crowd, pumping their fists and singing along in response. Taking in the scene, one thing was abundantly clear: This is not your grandfather's D'Angelico company.

"The D'Angelico name was always associated with classy jazzboxes," Ojeda says, relaxing in a backroom office space following his performance. "I mean, John D'Angelico never even *built* a solidbody guitar back in the day." Indeed, John D'Angelico made his legendary name on handcrafted, stunningly designed f-hole archtops, which he built out of his shop in Manhattan's Lower East Side starting in the Thirties. When

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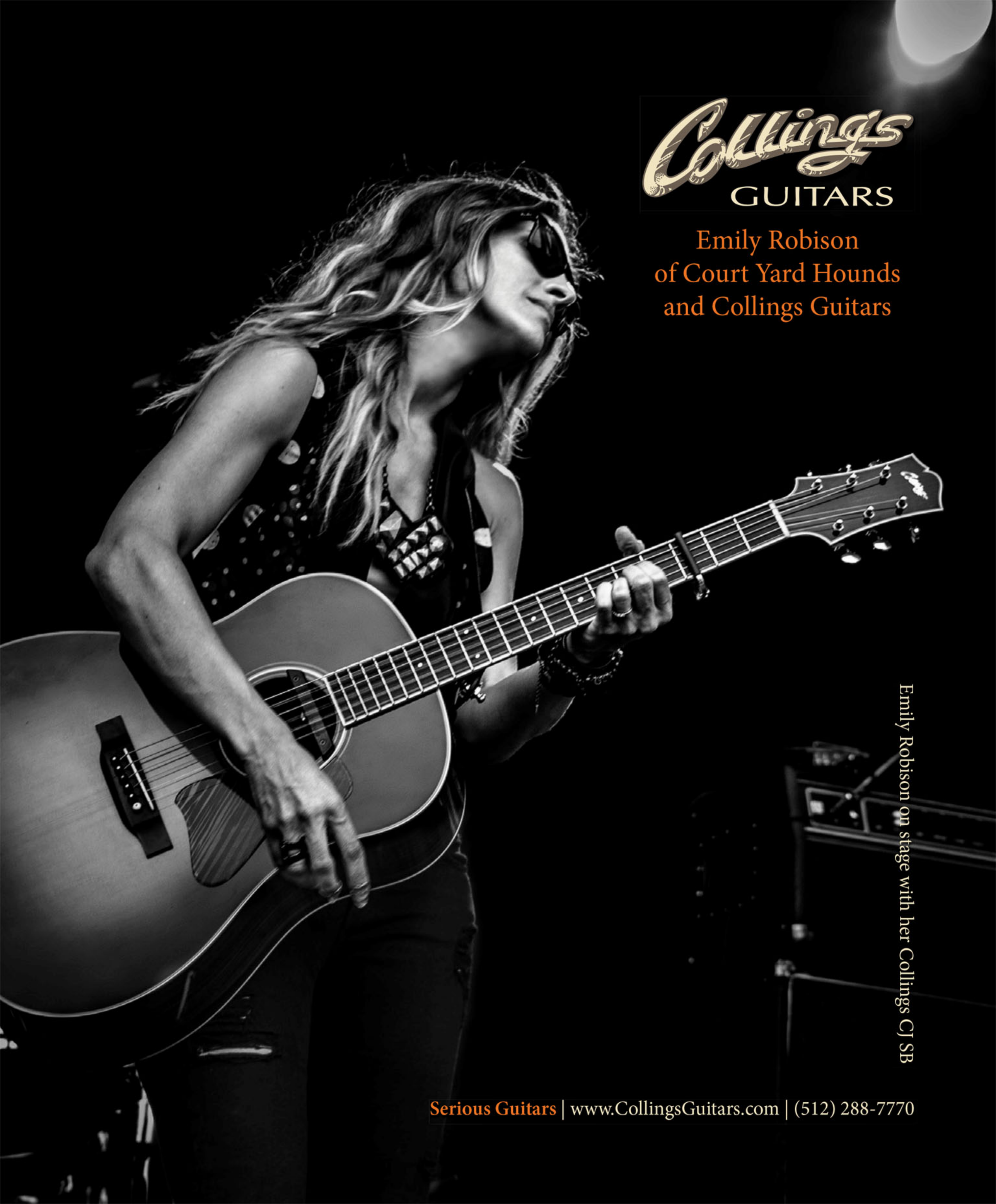

Emily Robison on stage with her Collings CJ SB

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he died in 1964, the name went with him (even as his apprentice, Jimmy D'Aquisto, carried on in a similar tradition). In the years since, original D'Angelico guitars, particularly his New Yorker and Excel models, have become some of the most desired instruments in the guitar world.

But roughly four years ago, a new team of guitar men, including current D'Angelico executive vice president Steve Pisani, purchased the name and revived the company. "In the last few years, they've updated the line to include different styles, which also keep that classiness that D'Angelico is known for—those art deco touches like the stairstep tailpiece and the beautiful headstocks," Ojeda says. "It's a very cool thing."

Now Ojeda is working with D'Angelico on a signature version of their SD model (which will feature artist-specific touches like hotter pickups, a thinner neck, and Ojeda's bull's-eye finish). What's more, the two are cross-promoting the endeavor with another of his products: his new line of hot sauces. Dubbed Eddie Ojeda's Twisted Hot Sauce, the award-winning brand boasts three varietals—a mild Apple Serrano, a medium Cherry Habanero, and a tongue-scorching Peach Carolina Reaper. To tie in with the condiment, D'Angelico will be offering the Eddie Ojeda signature guitar in three colors: green, red, and peach, each with a black bull's-eye, to match the trio of flavors. Says Ojeda, "When they first came to me with the idea, I thought, I don't know, a bull's eye-on a D'Angelico? But when I saw it I said, 'Wow, that's pretty cool!' And I thought it was a great touch to pair the colors with the hot sauces."

"THE WHOLE FOODIE THING IS SO NEW TO ME, BUT I LOVE IT." —EDDIE OJEDA.

Ojeda, who still tours regularly with Twisted Sister, got into the hot sauce world almost by happenstance. "At first it was just something I used to spice up my own food," he says. "I eat egg whites in the mornings, and egg whites are pretty bland, you know? So I started trying out different hot sauces to add to them. Eventually, I was talking to a chef friend of mine and I said, 'I think I wanna do my own.' I eat a lot of cherries, for health reasons, and I thought I'd like to try to do something made with a fruit. We got together, made a few different batches, and finally came up with the right one, which was the cherry habanero flavor. I did a small run, maybe 150 cases, and I figured that maybe I'd break even. But then the response was amazing. I won an award, and people were buying it wherever they could find it. I never thought it would turn into a real business."

When it was clear that it *was* becoming a real business, Ojeda turned to Pisani, an old friend, to assist in helping him market the sauce. The two have known each other since the early Eighties, when Pisani worked as a salesman at the 48th Street location of Sam Ash Music in Manhattan, and the members of Twisted Sister were among his regular clients. After 30 years at Sam Ash, Pisani says, "I had the opportunity with my partners to take over the D'Angelico name. We restarted it as a new guitar line, and within a few years we made it into a global brand. Eddie and I figured we could do the same thing with his hot sauce. And it's a nice fit: D'Angelico is a New York brand, and Twisted Sister is a New York institution. And Eddie is an iconic guitarist with an iconic guitar design."

D'Angelico NEW YORK

Founded in 1932 by master-luthier John D'Angelico in New York City, D'Angelico Guitars is revered for making some of the finest archtop and semi-hollow guitars in history. Now seen in the hands of iconic artists like Eddie Ojeda of Twisted Sister, D'Angelico has returned to produce stunning, diverse lines of exceptionally-crafted instruments.

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Ojeda says he'll be playing his newly designed D'Angelico onstage when Twisted Sister returns to the road later this year. Amazingly, since the band reunited in the early 2000s after more than a decade apart, they've been riding a wave of popularity that rivals, if not in some ways surpasses, what they experienced in the Eighties. "We're regularly headlining festivals for crowds of 80,000 people, which is not something we ever did back then," Ojeda says. "It's mind blowing." That said, Ojeda also confirms that this year—his 40th with the band—will likely be their last hurrah. "I know some people don't want to believe it," he says, "but as far as we're concerned, this is the 'final final.'"

After that, Ojeda says he might explore the possibility of doing a second solo album, which would be the follow-up to his guitar-heavy 2006 solo debut, *Axes 2 Axes*. He'll also continue to work with D'Angelico, as well as delve even further into the food world. "The whole foodie thing is so new to me," he says, "but I love it."

To that end, Ojeda recently had a chance to flex his food muscles on national TV, taking part in a special rock-and-roll-themed episode (sample ingredients: rock candy, chicken drumsticks, beer) of the Food Network competition show *Chopped*. There, Ojeda went toe-to-toe in the kitchen against Lita Ford, Dweezil Zappa, and the ultimate winner, Foreigner singer Kelly Hansen. "It was intense!" Ojeda says of the *Chopped* experience. "You have 20 minutes to come up with a dish, and at the same time there's, like, 40 cameras in your face. It's like trying to cook on a red carpet." He laughs. "I'm definitely not a chef, but it was refreshing to do something a little outside of my normal thing."

"EDDIE IS AN ICONIC GUITARIST WITH AN ICONIC GUITAR DESIGN."
—STEVE PISANI

In general, Ojeda says, he wants to continue to pursue new endeavors, be they musical or otherwise, and see how far he can go with them. "With D'Angelico, I think it would be great to explore more options, like maybe doing an SD with an access heel, or even a double cutaway," he says. "And with the hot sauce? I mean, I'd love to see it continue to grow, to the point where you see a bottle on the table in every restaurant, just like Tabasco. That would be the ultimate, you know? There's no limit." GA

BUYER'S CLUB

Collectors and celebrities converged in Manhattan for
GUERNSEY'S 2016 GUITAR AUCTION

By Alan di Perna

Guernsey's 2016 Guitar Auction

CHRIS GILL

ENCOMPASSING ABOUT 250 LOTS, Guernsey's February 27 Guitar Auction at Manhattan's Bohemian National Hall offered a dazzling array of celebrity, historic, rare, and beautiful guitars. Sale items embraced a balanced cross-section of acoustic and electric guitars—solidbodies, archtops, and flattops dating back as far as 1880 and moving right up through the present day. Instruments from the industry's biggest names—Fender, Gibson, Gretsch, Ibanez, Martin, PRS, Rickenbacker, Taylor, and more—were well represented, as were guitars from bygone masters like Joseph Bohmann, John D'Angelico, Jimmy D'Aquisto, the Larson Brothers, and Stromberg, and current classics from Beardsell, Benedetto, Buscarino, and Traugott.

Instruments owned by celebrity players like Eric Clapton, Stevie Ray Vaughan, George Benson, Eddie Van Halen, and Johnny Winter attracted most of the attention and highest bids, but the auction also included various historically important guitars played by Billy Bauer, Tony Mottola, and Don Peake (a session guitarist with the Wrecking Crew). Many top players were also in the crowd that converged on the Bohemian Hall to observe the sale and bid for items.

"It was thrilling to have someone like Pat Metheny in attendance at the auction and buying," says Guernsey's president Arlan Ettinger, "just as it was to see the folks from Martin and other people who rank high in the world of guitars. The sale looked great. We couldn't have been complimented more on the presentation of the instruments. Everybody had a good time, and we're pleased with that. We sold probably three-quarters of the items, and there have a been a lot of callers since then, looking to acquire what remains."

For those who missed the event, here are 10 noteworthy guitars that went up on the block.

TONY MOTTOLA'S 1952 GIBSON SUPER 400 CES SEVEN-STRING CUSTOM

This unique and gorgeous archtop electric is one of only two seven-string Super 400s ever made, and the only one built with 24 frets. It was custom-made for top-ranking session guitarist Tony Mottola (1918–2004), noted for his work with Frank Sinatra, Perry Como, and Doc Severinsen's *Tonight Show* Orchestra. As Gibson didn't normally produce seven-string Super 400s, the Mottola guitar is remarkable for its many custom appointments, including dual P-90 pickups with seven pole pieces, and a bridge and tailpiece specially tooled to accommodate seven strings. Carrying a pre-sale estimate of $60–70,000, this historic guitar unfortunately didn't find a buyer.

CIRCA 1904 05 LARSON BROTHERS PRESENTATION SPECIAL ORDER

Known for their fine craftsmanship, luthier siblings Carl and August Larson were born in Sweden but immigrated to the U.S. in the late 19th century. This handsome custom Larson model dates from early in their American career, although it was discovered in Sweden. The guitar's abalone trim is complemented by a beautiful vine-and-floral inlay pattern on the fingerboard. Vintage guitar expert George Gruhn of Gruhn Guitars has said that this is the most ornate early Larson instrument that he's ever seen. It claimed a final sale price of $18,750.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF GUERNSEY'S

EDDIE VAN HALEN'S 1982 CHARVEL

This guitar played a brief role in metal icon Eddie Van Halen's long and sometimes turbulent history with Charvel Guitars. The story began in the mid-Seventies, when Van Halen built his iconic black-and-white-striped "Frankenstein" guitar from parts he purchased from Wayne Charvel and Lynn Ellsworth. After Grover Jackson purchased the Charvel name in late 1978 and began producing "Van Halen Model" instruments without the guitarist's authorization, Ed's relationship with the Charvel company soured. Van Halen issued a cease-and-desist order in 1982, but just prior to doing so he apparently took delivery of five Charvel/Jackson guitars. The guitar in the Guernsey's auction was one of the five, given to Van Halen free of charge, presumably as a peace offering from Grover Jackson. Features of this guitar include a wide nut width, slim neck profile, DiMarzio Super Distortion humbucking pickup, and brass vintage Strat-style non-locking vibrato tailpiece. Each Charvel "Van Halen Model" had a unique striping pattern, so this instrument is easily identifiable as the one Van Halen played on a 1982 episode of the *Entertainment Tonight* television program. (A DVD of the segment was included with the lot.) This distinctive piece of heavy metal history claimed a final sale price of $84,375 (including buyer's premium).

STEVIE RAY VAUGHAN'S CIRCA 1966-67 FENDER STRATOCASTER

Like many of the guitars owned and played by the late Texan ax icon Stevie Ray Vaughan, this three-tone sunburst Strat bears several custom touches added by the artist himself during his lifetime, including his autograph, signed in gold ink and dated *'90*. A familiar feature from other Vaughan Strats are the initials *SRV* spelled out in automotive lettering stickers, while a faded and worn sticker with the word "Cobras" barely legible is affixed to the pickguard. This would seem to associate the instrument with Vaughan's 1975–'77 tenure with Paul Ray and the Cobras in Austin, Texas. In another custom blandishment, again characteristic of SRV, the rear body neck plate is engraved with the legend *STEVIE RAY VAUGHAN DALLAS, TX*. The guitar sold for a solid $80,000 (not including buyer's premium).

GUITAR AFICIONADO No. 58 MAY/JUNE 2018

GORDON WALLER'S 1964 GIBSON J-160E

While the J-160E model is most closely associated with the Beatles, it was a favorite of many British Invaders, including Gordon Waller (1945–2009) of the hit-making mid-Sixties duo Peter and Gordon. As substantial play wear indicates, the guitar was one of Waller's favorites, used on many Peter & Gordon hits, such as the Lennon–McCartney-penned "World Without Love." The guitar has come down through the years pretty much unaltered, save for one new reproduction control knob and some internal signs that an additional acoustic pickup was added and subsequently removed at some point in the instrument's history. The guitar claimed $4,000 (not including buyer's premium).

FRANNY BEECHER'S 1959 GIBSON ES-350TDN

Francis "Franny" Beecher (1921–2014) is remembered today for his groundbreaking work with the pioneering rock and roll group Bill Haley & His Comets. Beecher purchased this instrument new in 1959, and it is one of the few guitars he owned in his lifetime. Gibson produced only 57 ES-350TDN models with a natural finish in 1959 and only another 90 that year with a sunburst finish. Equipped with dual "PAF" humbucking pickups, the guitar is virtually stock, save for an ebony fingerboard that Beecher had installed when the original one became worn. As the blonde ES-350 is also associated with Chuck Berry, it is a particularly iconic early rock and roll guitar made all the more desirable by its rarity. Gibson made only 314 blonde ES-350 guitars during the model's brief production run between 1955 and 1963. This example claimed a $10,000 final sale price (not including buyer's premium).

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BILLY BAUER'S 1954 D'ANGELICO EXCEL

A golden-era D'Angelico archtop cutaway electric in a gorgeous and highly coveted blonde finish, this guitar was owned and extensively played by early modern jazz exponent Billy Bauer (1915–2005). Noted for his work with Benny Goodman, Lester Young, and Charlie Parker, Bauer was also a member of the NBC *Tonight Show* band and played in the *Today Show* band during the early days of television. He is also remembered as one of shred icon Joe Satriani's guitar teachers. This exquisite archtop sold for $30,000 (not including buyer's premium).

1971 RICKENBACKER MODEL 331 LIGHTSHOW GUITAR & 1970 TRANSONIC TS100 AMP

A Rick model long coveted by collectors, the legendary Lightshow guitar was produced by Rickenbacker in relatively small quantities between 1970 and 1975. The Guernsey's sale paired a Lightshow guitar in museum condition with another innovative Rickenbacker design from the same period, a 1970 Transonic TS100 combo amp. The Lightshow guitar was the company's response to the late-Sixties vogue for light shows at rock concerts. It was based on the Rickenbacker Model 330, but was outfitted with a bound neck, translucent plastic top, and a series of colored lamps built into the body. Different colors lit up depending on the frequencies played on the guitar: red for treble, yellow for mids, and blue for bass. Case candy offered with the guitar included setup instructions, transformer, extra bulbs, cables, and cleaning cloth. Dating from the same period, the 100-watt, solid-state Rickenbacker Transonic amp was a highly innovative design incorporating a built-in fuzz circuit, guitar tuner, and eye-catching trapezoidal cabinet shape. Sold as a pair this dynamic duo claimed a final sale price of $20,000.

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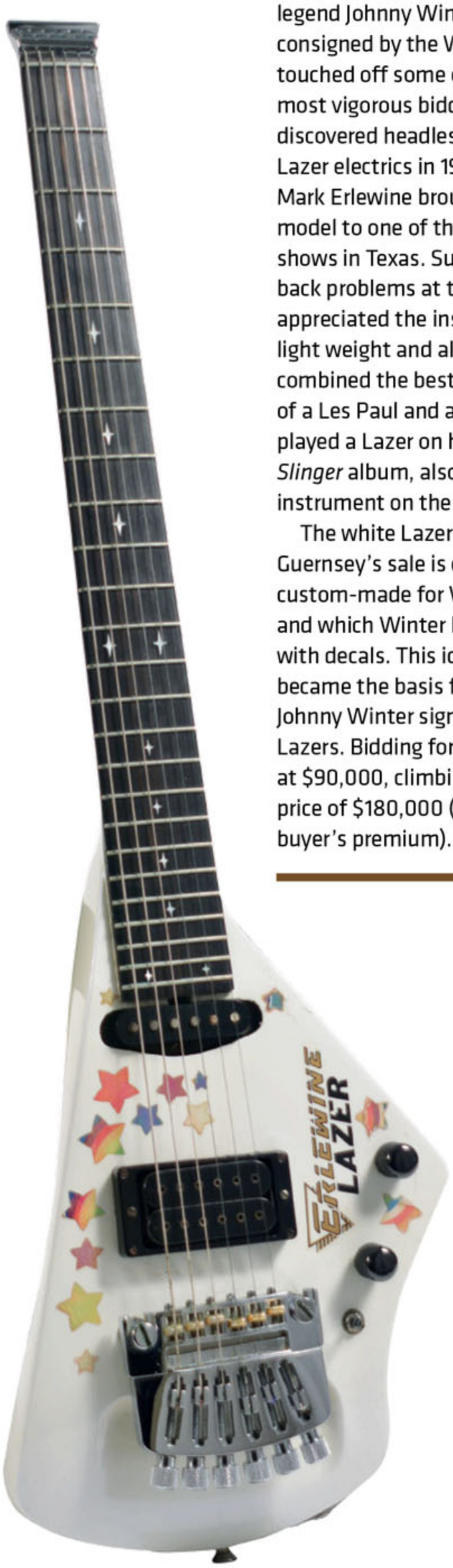
1944 GIBSON ROY SMECK RADIO GRANDE

Believed to be a one-of-a-kind instrument and the last Roy Smeck Radio Grande model ever made, this flattop is a fascinating example of the unusual guitars that came out of the Gibson factory during the WWII era. George Gruhn has authenticated it as 100 percent original, further identifying it as the first guitar made by Gibson with a 22-fret fingerboard, predating by some 15 years the 1952 Les Pauls previously regarded as the earliest 22-fret Gibsons. The guitar's mahogany back and sides also distinguish it from all other Smeck Radio Grandes, which were made with backs and sides of rosewood (Brazilian or Indian). Production of the Radio Grande model officially ceased in 1939, but this example's numerous nonstandard features are typical of Gibson's wartime production practices where remaining parts were combined to build complete instruments. It sold for $8,500 (not including buyer's premium).



JOHNNY WINTER'S ERLEWINE CUSTOM WHITE LAZER

A dramatic late entry to the Guernsey's sale was an Eighties-era Erlewine Lazer guitar owned and played by the late blues guitar legend Johnny Winter. It was consigned by the Winter family and touched off some of the auction's most vigorous bidding. Winter first discovered headless, lightweight Lazer electrics in 1984 when luthier Mark Erlewine brought a production model to one of the guitarist's shows in Texas. Suffering from back problems at the time, Winter appreciated the instrument's light weight and also felt that it combined the best characteristics of a Les Paul and a Strat. He played a Lazer on his 1984 *Guitar Slinger* album, also featuring the instrument on the cover.

The white Lazer in the Guernsey's sale is one that Erlewine custom-made for Winter in 1989, and which Winter later decorated with decals. This iconic instrument became the basis for the Erlewine Johnny Winter signature model Lazers. Bidding for the guitar began at $90,000, climbing to a final sale price of $180,000 (not including buyer's premium).

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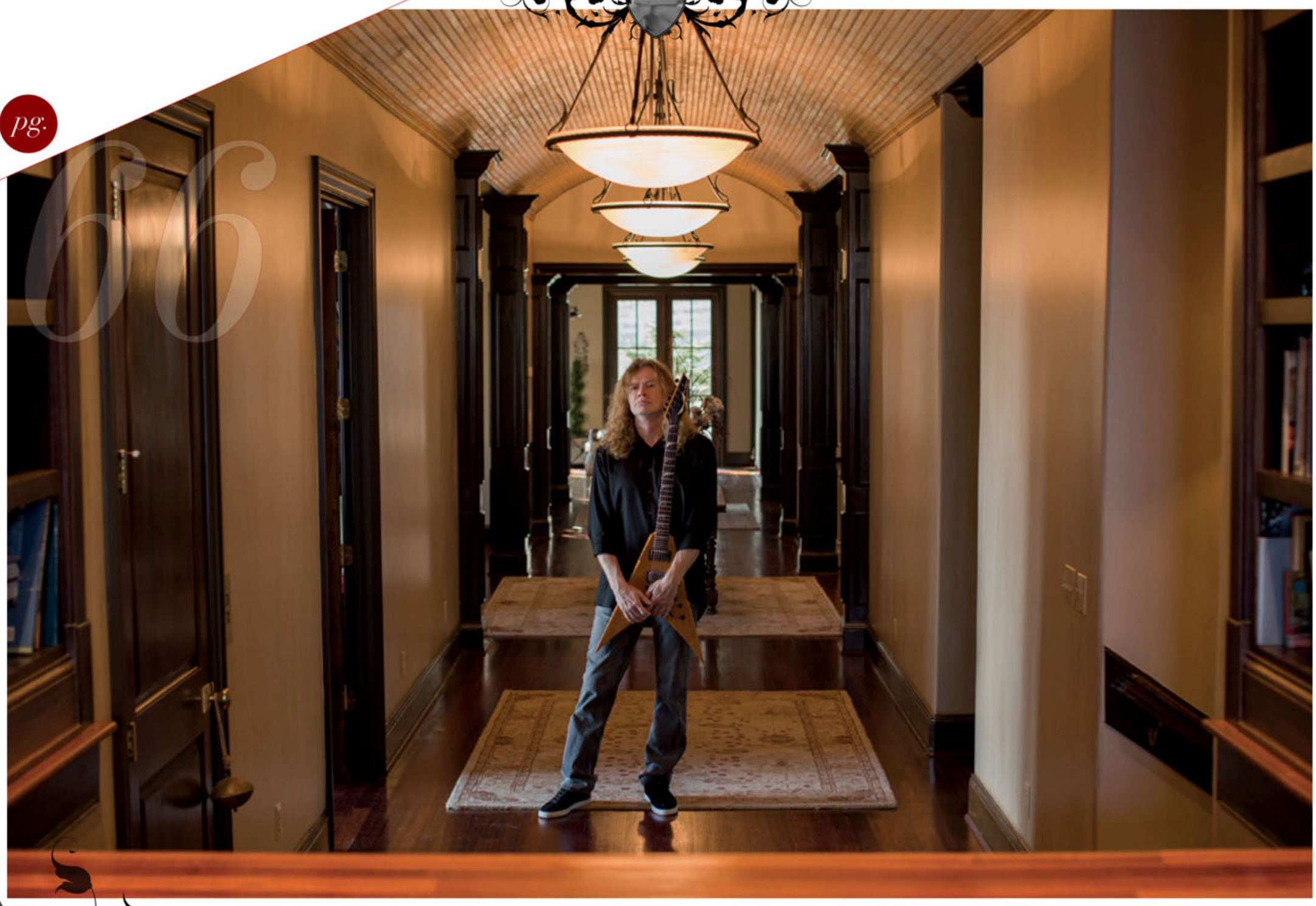
Megadeth's **Dave Mustaine** discovers love

by Chris Gill *Photography by Keith Leman*

in a glass of Syrah.



Most human beings are too wonderfully complex to summarize with one word, but if one were forced to choose a single word to describe Megadeth frontman Dave Mustaine, *dedicated* would be a good choice. The phenomenal success of Megadeth over its 33-year history is testimony to Mustaine's dedication to the crafts of guitar playing and songwriting, as well as an unwavering devotion to his particularly aggressive style of heavy metal, which has defied and endured many changes in the pop music landscape that sometimes seduced his heroes and contemporaries. That dedication has paid off too, as Megadeth's most recent album, *Dystopia*, debuted on the *Billboard* 200 at Number Three, which was his band's highest debut since *Countdown to Extinction* entered the charts at Number Two in 1992.

But one of Mustaine's most impressive displays of dedication is how he recently moved his family from their home in Fallbrook, California to Nashville, Tennessee in support of his daughter Electra's ambitions as a country singer. "Electra was making a lot of effort and progress on her own," Mustaine says, "and she wasn't throwing her last name around, which a lot of rock-star kids do. California is a great place to live, but it's not the ideal location for pursuing a career in country music. We were considering buying a second home in Texas, but when Megadeth played in Tennessee a bunch of people told me we should consider Nashville instead. After all, Nashville is called Music City for a reason. Electra is moving full steam ahead with her career now. I'm really proud of her."

Mustaine admits that it took him and his wife Pamela a while to find the perfect house in Nashville, but they settled in quite quickly and comfortably after moving there in October of 2014. However, instead of buying a second house they decided to make it their permanent home. Mustaine was already quite comfortable working in Nashville—Megadeth had

"It's very rare when I find a wine that I think is better than ours."

previously recorded several albums at studios there—so the transition wasn't too difficult to make. Megadeth even recorded *Dystopia* a short distance away from Mustaine's new home at Lattitude Studio South, located in the idyllic village of Leiper's Fork.

About the only thing that Mustaine left behind in California was close proximity to the vineyards and winery that produces his new Mustaine Vineyards wines. Mustaine Vineyards introduced its first wine in 2014 when Dave and Fallbrook Winery collaborated on the release of the 2012 Symphony Interrupted Cabernet Sauvignon, which was bottled to commemorate Mustaine's performance with the San Diego Symphony. After that wine proved to be incredibly successful, Mustaine joined forces with Temecula, California's South Coast Winery to produce additional Mustaine Vineyards wines. To date, Mustaine Vineyards and South Coast have released three wines—the 2011 Blood of Heroes Syrah, 2013 Kingmaker Super Tuscan blend, and 2013 Hook in Mouth Monterey AVA red blend.

"Working with Dean Guitars feels like home to me. They have treated me really well."

"The idea for Mustaine Vineyards originally came from my wife," says Mustaine. "We planted a vineyard at our house in Fallbrook, and we got to know some of the winemakers who lived near us. When I was going to play with the San Diego Symphony, she suggested doing something that could join the worlds of metal and classical music, which can really collide. The manager of Fallbrook Winery planted our vineyard, so we went there and tasted a couple of different blends. When we found one we liked, we had it bottled. They bottled about 120 cases, which sold out within 48 hours. I think that people were curious to see what I liked."

Mustaine was very happy with the wine's instant success, which inspired him to continue with his winemaking venture. While he was pleased with the wines produced by Fallbrook Winery, for his next effort he decided to form a partnership with South Coast Winery, which has a higher output and is better equipped to handle increased demand. "My kids were attending school in Temecula, so I got to know several people in the wine business there," he explains. "There are a lot of vineyards in Temecula, but South Coast is the best. We went there

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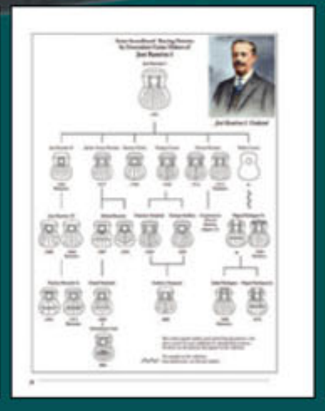

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and met with the winemaker Jon McPherson and general manager Fred Novinger. It was so easy. We all had the same outlook towards life—we love life and celebrate it. Wine is the gift that we are giving to the world. Jon is making blends that I like the taste of, and we present them through this company."

The Blood of Heroes Syrah, which was the first Mustaine Vineyards wine produced by South Coast, is also Mustaine's favorite. "It's a much more sophisticated wine than the Cabernet we produced previously," Mustaine says. "It's also much more expensive. I really like the Syrah, not because it's more expensive but because of how it tastes. When I first tasted a sip of Cognac, I fell in love with that feeling you get when it first touches your mouth and that warmth goes all the way down. That's the feeling that I get with the Syrah. After that we did the Kingmaker Super Tuscan blend, which is 70 percent Sangiovese and 30 percent Cabernet Sauvignon, and we just came out with the Hook in Mouth Monterey blend [*50 percent Cabernet Sauvignon, 34 percent Zinfandel, 11 percent Syrah, and 5 percent Petit Verdot*]. Right now it's my second favorite wine that we've put out. The Syrah just blew my mind, and the Monterey blend is very close to it."

Whereas many wine producers and connoisseurs alike collect and enjoy a wide variety of wines, Mustaine says that he prefers his own Mustaine Vineyards wines. "A lot of wine drinkers like different things," he says. "Right now I prefer the good, straight reds that we're making. I don't like most white wines or sweet wines that much, although I know some of those wines can be very good. When my wife and I go out to restaurants, I'll often try other wines to see how they compare to ours. Usually I go, '...ours is better,'" he says with a laugh. "It's very rare when I find a wine that I think is better than ours."

As a result, the wine cellar in Mustaine's new Nashville home is stocked exclusively with Mustaine Vineyards wines. Similarly, the only guitars that one will find in Mustaine's arsenal, including his acoustics, are the brand that he's been endorsing for the last 10 years: Dean. "Other companies that I worked with before just wanted to make guitars and send me a few," Mustaine explains. "Dean feels like home to me, and they have treated me really well. When it comes to service, quality control, and understanding the touring musician's mindset, which is the most important part of all, Dean is the right company for me. When you play a guitar night after night, a lot can happen to it. Whenever I need to have a guitar fixed, I have no problem sending it back to Dean because when I get it back it's always the way it's supposed to be."

Dean currently offers 26 different Dave Mustaine models. Mustaine's favorite Dean model is the Stradi VMNT ("It's a work of art," he says), and he calls the Holy Grail, which features a 24k gold-leaf finish, "our best design for the eccentric guitar collector." While a V-shaped guitar has been Mustaine's main axe of choice since the early days of Megadeth, lately he's frequently been seen on stage with his new Explorer-shaped model, the Zero.

"The Zero reminds me of what I used to play before I was in Metallica," he says. "There's something very metal about a V and an

Explorer shape. A lot of guys use Strats, which are very cool, but when most people see Strats they think of Eric Clapton and Jeff Beck. I love that music as well, but for the kind of music I play I need something that sounds brighter and heavier than the typical Strat sound."

In addition to being able to produce his own lines of wines and guitars, Mustaine says that the greatest benefit of more than three decades of success is his dedicated legion of fans. "Even in Megadeth's worst of times, things were actually fantastic," he says. "The fans have always supported our music. They even support and follow Megadeth's former band members after they're no longer in the band. Some critics single me out for having many different band members in Megadeth, but nobody ever talks about how Black Sabbath has had more different members than us. But for Megadeth fans that's a good thing as they have more music to enjoy and support. They have a respectful, mature relationship with all the musicians who have played with me and continue to stick by them. I've got the greatest job in the world, because all I have to do is sell what I love. Fortunately, a lot of other people love it too." GA

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BETWEEN THE BRIDGE AND THE NUT, THE ZERO FRET IS A TIMBRE-BALANCING SLICE OF METAL.

{ *BY FLIP SCIPIO* }

I WAS STARING at the 1966 Framus 12-string guitar hanging on my wall—with its five switches, four pots, flip-up mute, whammy bar, and master volume control—and wondering why the engineer of this pandemonium decided to complete these bewildering features with the addition of a zero fret, as if this guitar wasn't festooned with enough gizmos to divert the player from such trivia as playing in tune. But right at that point, into my shop came a 1967 Gretsch 6120 Chet Atkins Nashville model, which is a much more reasonable guitar that also happens to sport a zero fret. Since we looked at the inclusion of a zero fret on Vox Mando Guitar in the previous column, it seems that a closer look at the use of the zero fret is in order.

A zero fret is a piece of fretwire that's located in front of the nut and replaces the nut as one of the two nodal points of the string's vibration, the bridge saddle being the other. On a guitar with a zero fret, the nut is demoted to a mere spacer of the strings. In other words, the guitar's scale length is defined by doubling the distance between the center of the zero fret and the 12th fret.

Although the zero fret is usually associated with Mosrite and post-1959 Gretsch guitars, many Japanese guitars have zero frets. They were undoubtedly inspired by the Mosrite Ventures model guitars, which are very collectible in Japan.

The main characteristic of the zero fret is that it produces an overall even timbre on the strings of the guitar. There is none of the "open-string" tone quality, produced by the use of a piece of bone or plastic, which some players characterize as mellifluous and others may find irksome. Although it appears that the zero fret is favored mainly by pick players—like Joe Maphis, who romped on his Mosrite double neck, and Duane Eddy, who twanged on his Gretsch 6120—the immortal Chet Atkins specified an aluminum nut on his new 1954 Gretsch 6120 model, possibly influenced by Paul Bigsby's use of an aluminum nut and bridge on his instruments. The aluminum nut was a mainstay on the Gretsch 6120 until 1959, when the factory switched to using a zero fret on all of its guitars. It's my guess that this switch had to do with the fact that making and installing an aluminum nut correctly is a time-consuming task. Cutting string slots evenly and precisely takes time and practice, and can be considered hard on cutting tools. Setting up the fret-slot cutting machine with one more saw blade for a zero fret was a much simpler way of obtaining even string response.

One frequently overlooked fact is that adjusting the zero fret to its proper height is a tricky and laborious job. On the majority of guitars with zero frets that I see, the zero fret has been left too high, which can make the guitar sound sharp as well as be unnecessarily hard to play, especially in the lower playing positions. The advantage of a regular nut as the start of the string's vibration is that each string slot can be lowered to the individual tension of the string gauge used. The individual string that's under inspection is loosened and its slot in the nut can be adjusted before the string is brought back to pitch.

To adjust the string height with a zero fret, however, the technician has to completely detune all the strings, which with 12-string instruments is especially tedious, and then lower the zero fret with a file while simultaneously maintaining the radius of the fingerboard. After the fret has been lowered, the top has to be reshaped to its desired crown, all the strings have to be brought back up to full pitch, and the neck has to come back to its proper shape before a proper assessment of the work can be made. This process often requires many repeats, since there is no clean fix for a zero fret that's been lowered too far, other than to replace it. Obviously, this type of fine-tuning has to be executed by a skillful and experienced technician with affection for the often eccentric guitars that use zero frets, but the results can be very impressive and sometimes revelatory. (My thanks to Andrew Carillo and his mighty 6120.) GA

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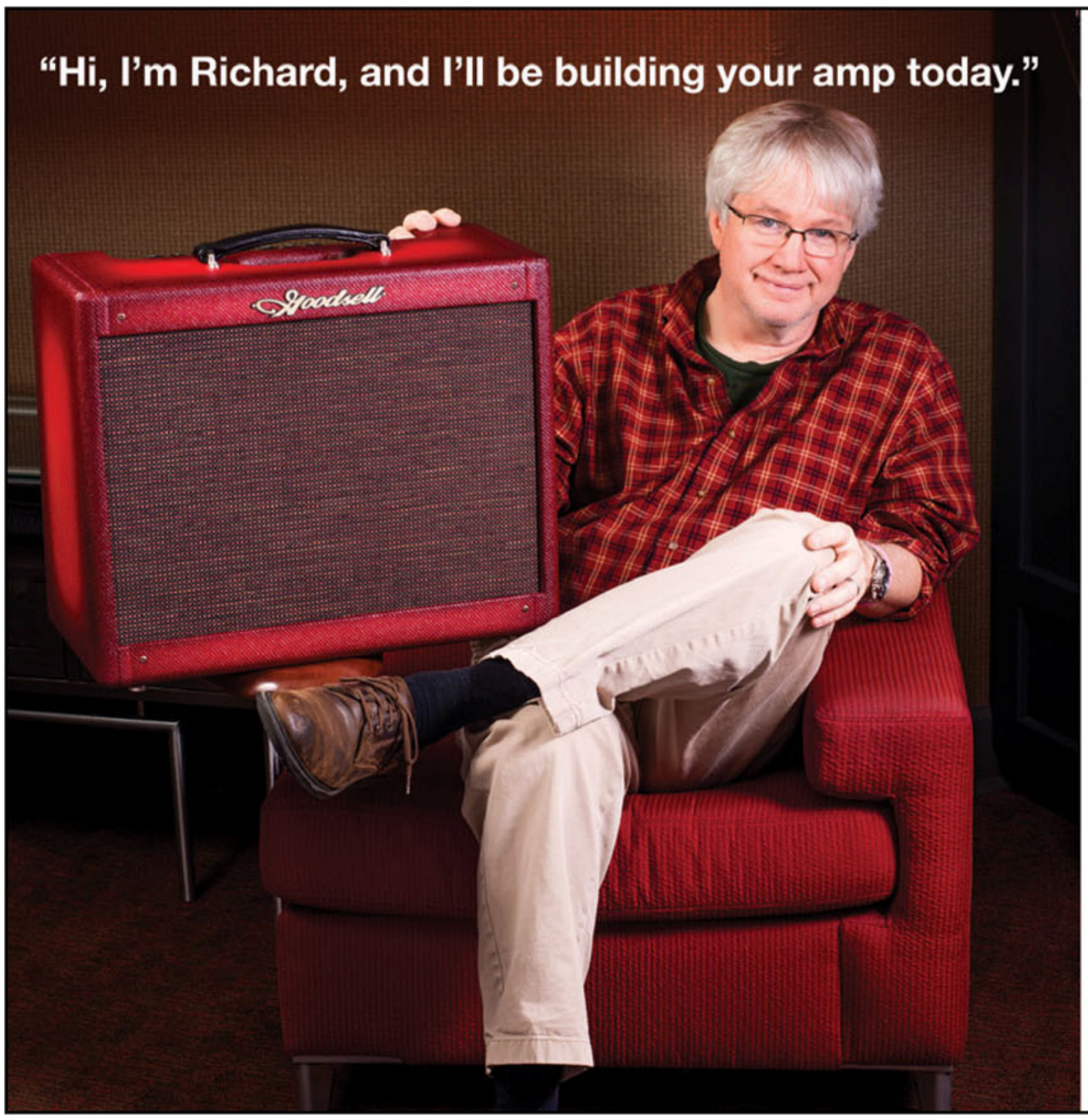

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Risky Business

THE HAZARDS OF PURCHASING WINES EN PRIMEUR

{ *BY CHRIS GILL, CWAS* }

THE LAST few years have been unusually fraught with peril for collectors of fine wines, particularly wines from France. As prices for the most desirable French wines soared into the stratosphere, the risk of purchasing counterfeit wines also increased substantially. One of the most notorious and publicized examples of the proliferation of counterfeit wines was the 2012 arrest of Rudy Kurniawan, who consigned countless bottles of fake Bordeaux and Burgundy wines to several major auction houses, which sold for millions of dollars before his scam was discovered.

However, wine collectors are increasingly likely to be victims of a much more common scam that is extremely difficult to detect until it's too late—fraudulent futures sales. The practice of selling wines *en primeur* (while the wine is still in the barrel a few years before bottling and shipment) has existed for centuries in Bordeaux, although *en primeur* (also known as futures or sometimes pre-arrival) purchases didn't gain momentum in the U.S. until the Eighties. For a while, buying wine *en primeur* was a great investment as prices often soared 20 percent or more by the time the wine was released, but starting with Bordeaux's 2009 vintage, most *en primeur* buyers actually lost money, particularly with the recent devaluation of the Euro.

The highly inflated prices of desirable Bordeaux, Burgundy, and Rhone wines and the prospect of paying more for a product a few years before it even arrives are enough to discourage cost-conscious wine buyers and potential investors. But another reason to avoid *en primeur* purchases is the possibility that the wines may never arrive at all and you'll lose all or most of your money. That is exactly what happened to me and 9,200 other wine connoisseurs who purchased "pre-arrival" orders from a retailer in Berkeley, California called Premier Cru, and similar fates have recently befallen customers of European sellers like 1855.com (a.k.a. Heracles) and Private Finance Partners.

What all of these failed, bankrupt companies have in common is that they were likely operating Ponzi schemes where they collected funds for products they didn't have and never would have. I fell for Premier Cru's scam because my first purchase from them was a case of relatively inexpensive Chateauneuf-du-Pape that arrived a few weeks after I placed the order. Confident that the company was legit, I later placed a handful of futures orders for several Bordeaux wines. After the traditional Bordeaux release period came and went and my wines hadn't arrived, I began to get suspicious and discovered that some Premier Cru customers typically waited five to six years before their wines arrived.

Those customers were the lucky ones. I received only a handful of the least-expensive wines I had ordered over the six years since my first Premier Cru futures purchase, which temporarily kept my suspicions at bay. But soon I grew tired of inquiring about the status of my wines every few months only to be told that they were on the next container shipment arriving from France and to call back then. I managed to get maybe 20 percent of the wines I ordered before a notice informing me of Premier Cru's bankruptcy (and staggering $70 million debt) arrived in the mail last January. Now instead of trying to keep track of old futures purchases, I am spending my time wading through stacks of legal documents, filling out forms, and deciphering confusing legalese in hopes of receiving a fraction of my money back.

The Internet has helped the *en primeur* system become a haven for scammers and thieves. Whereas most wine collectors used to make futures purchases from local retailers, now many people are buying wines from retailers across the United States or even in other countries. The majority of these businesses are legitimate, but unfortunately it is very easy for dishonest sellers to blend into their ranks. Premier Cru had been in business for many years and even built a fancy new brick-and-mortar store in 2010 (no doubt funded by customers like myself), so often it can be difficult to determine whether a seller is legit or not.

I could recommend any number of strategies and approaches that would lessen the likelihood of losing money to *en primeur* thieves, but at this point the only reliable tactic is to avoid futures or "pre-arrival" sales altogether. It's a practice that places all of the risk on the consumer and simply needs to end once and for all. If you want a wine, wait until it is in stock. To paraphrase a famous saying, a wine in hand is worth a case *en primeur.* GA

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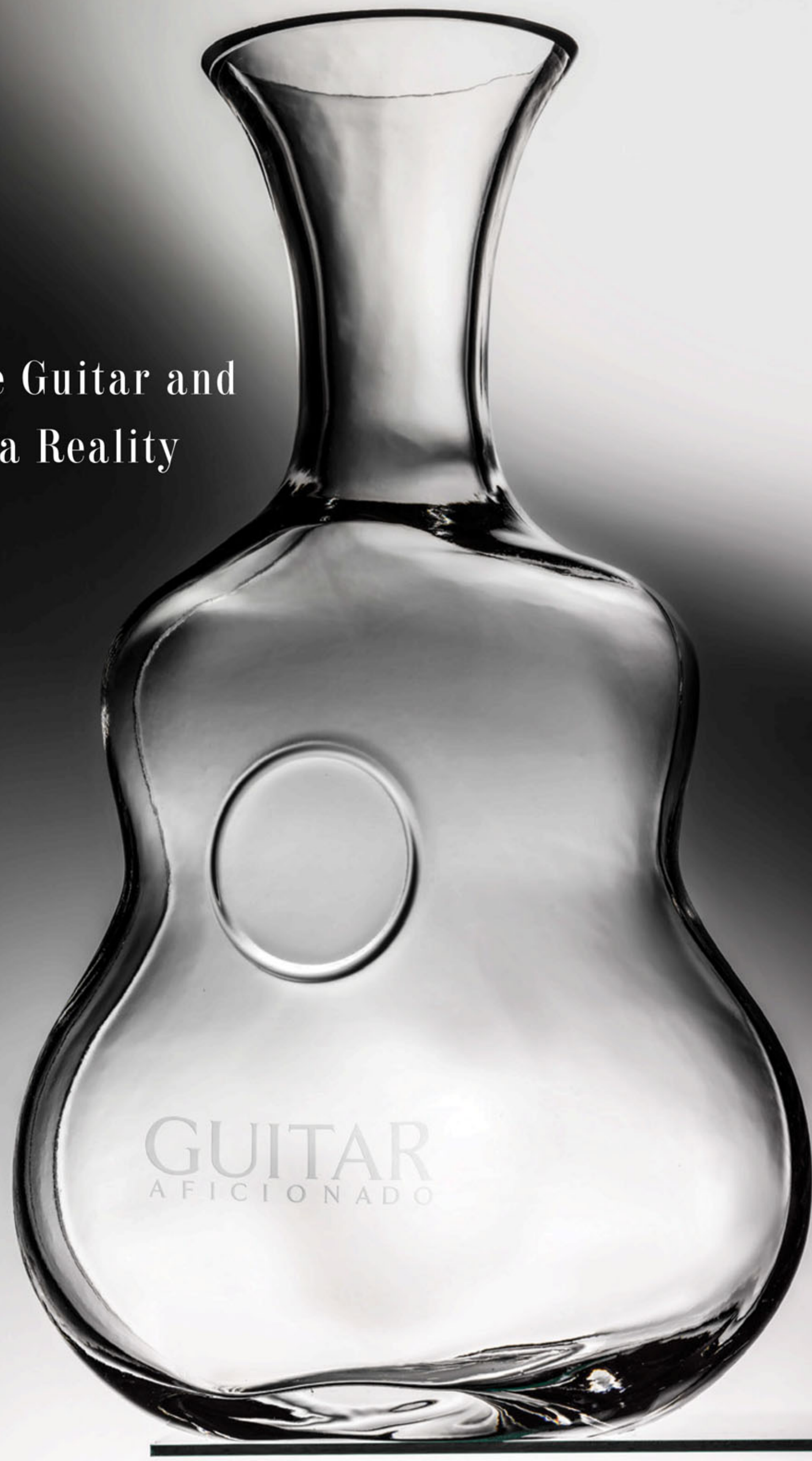

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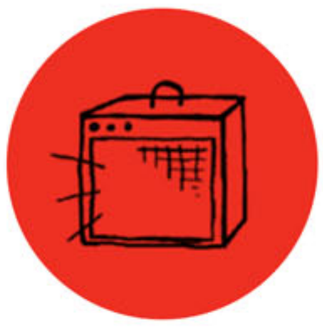

Here Comes the Sunn

THE HIGH-POWERED AMPS THAT BROUGHT ROCK TO THE COLISEUM STAGE.

{ *BY MITCH COLBY* }

AS A YOUNG GUITARIST in the late Sixties, I was impressed by the Sunn amps used by Jimi Hendrix and Mountain's Leslie West. Even the Who and the Rolling Stones used Sunn amps for a very brief period while on tour in the U.S. But I never knew much about Sunn until recently, when an old friend and guitarist decided to put together a collection of Sunn and Marshall amps from the Sixties and Seventies. Over the past few months, he brought me about 15 of the company's amps to restore, including several previously owned by Mountain bassist Felix Pappalardi.

Sunn was started by the brothers Conrad and Norm Sundholm in a garage in Tualatin, Oregon, in 1964. Norm was the bassist for the Kingsmen (of "Louie, Louie" fame), and the endeavor was inspired by his need for a bass amp that was powerful enough for the larger concert halls where his band played. The Sundholm's amps quickly gained popularity, and in late 1965 they moved into a proper production facility and formed the Sunn Musical Equipment Company.

The Sundholms owned Sunn until 1971, when they sold the company to the Hartzell Corporation. Hartzell produced Sunn amps until the early Eighties, when Bill Hartzell died in a plane crash and the company ceased production. Fender bought the Sunn name in 1987 but didn't introduce any Sunn-branded products until 1998. The resurrected Sunn product line was short-lived, lasting only until 2002. FMIC still owns the Sunn name today.

Most of Sunn's original designs were built on the same platform. Models from the Sixties and early Seventies were Dynaco hi-fi amps with preamp mods. Their first "Model A" amps used a Dyna MKII monoblock power amp chassis and separate mono preamp with mods (and weird ones at that). The later 60-watt amps used the transformers and choke from the Dyna MKIII (including the ultra-linear output stage). The 120-watt amps used massive Dyna transformers and two standard Dyna chokes instead of one larger choke. Just like the Dyna amps, most Sunn amps used 6550s or KT88s, which are very robust power amp tubes. The preamps featured a single 12AX7 and a 6AN8A (or 7199) phase inverter. JBL speakers were standard for many models.

Unfortunately, the Dyna power transformers produce high B+ voltage, so the chassis-mounted multifilter caps were working at their limit. Now that wall voltages are higher than they were when the amps were built, the caps are underrated, so if you plan on using a Sunn amp today, the first two filter cap sections should be replaced with series caps for higher voltage capacity. Triode Electronics offers a kit for this very purpose. If you don't mind extra filtering, you can use a 40/40/40uf 600V cap can from Fliptops.com.

Although Sunn's different models were very similar, most examples reveal quite a bit a variation in features. Some have a contour control, and some didn't. Some have Hi and Lo boost switches, and of those some boosts work well while others don't. Some have eight- and four-ohm taps, while others have 16- and eight-ohm taps. (All of the output transformers have four-, eight-, and 16-ohm taps, but only two are connected to speaker jacks.) The external speaker jack automatically switches the impedance. This ensures proper impedance loading, but over time the jacks get dirty and wear out, so it would have been better if Sunn used a high-quality switch or dedicated jacks.

The models I recently worked on include 100S, 200S, 1000S, 1200S, 2000S, Spectrum, Spectrum II, Solaris, Sorado, Coliseum PA, Sonic I-40 (lower power, different transformers, 40 watts, EL34s), and the Model T. Hendrix used the Coliseum PA on several occasions, as did Leslie West to get that famous Mountain sound. It has an unusual circuit where the input goes directly to the volume controls on each channel, plus an overall master volume. A couple of things to be aware of: The volume controls almost always sound scratchy, but it's actually not the pots—it's the circuit. When using a Coliseum PA as a guitar amp, set the channel volume control all the way up and use the master to dial in the desired output level. The Coliseum is not a high-gain amp, and you have to crank it to get overdrive.

Some Sunn guitar amp models have solid-state reverb and tremolo circuits. Sunn used a three-gang pot for the tremolo circuit, but fortunately the tremolo pots on the amps I worked on were okay. Try to replace that today!

Sunn amps sound pretty good, but they're not my favorite. In general the treble is rather flat, while the bass is big and tight. However, a few simple mods can improve the sound. My favorite is the early Model T, which has a Marshall-style preamp and robust 120-watt 6550 output stage. The later Model T has a different preamp, but I haven't heard one, so I can't verify if it's an improvement. GA

Mitch Colby *helped develop many Marshall and Vox amp designs and is the founder of Colby Amplifications.*

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Honest AC

Carr Lincoln Amplifier

BY PAUL RIARIO

PHOTOGRAPHY BY MASSIMO GAMMACURTA

SOME OF STEVE CARR'S most popular combos like the Impala and best-selling Slant 6V have been loosely compared to and lovingly inspired by classic amps like the 1968 Bassman and 1964 Deluxe Reverb, respectively. However, that is where the resemblance ends. Each of Carr's award-winning amps is an original design, with completely distinctive tones and tube complements, and most feature variable power attenuation and channel switching, all of which makes practical sense for modern guitarists.

This time around, the newly inspired Lincoln takes it cues from a 1964 Vox AC10 but injects more personality and plenty of moxie in its dynamic voice without being a clone. If you get the chance to spend any time with the impressive Lincoln, you'll soon find out it's a powerhouse combo packed with a versatile range of features that definitively makes it a great amp for any application you'll ever need for the studio or stage.

Judging solely on its appearance, the Lincoln is a real modern-retro beauty, with two-tone tolex covering its meticulously crafted, dovetailed, solid-pine cabinet that houses a single Celestion Creamback M-65 12–inch speaker. The 18-watt combo features clean and overdrive channels, built-in all-tube reverb with independent reverb controls for each channel, and a built-in attenuator switch to cut output power down to a manageable, bedroom friendly six watts. The tube complement consists of a duet of EL84s and a quartet of 12AX7s, and a solid-state rectifier keeps the tone tight. Carr goes above and beyond in build quality with point-to-point hand wiring and superior components that include Analysis Plus speaker cable, Solen Aerospace Satellite capacitors, and custom output transformers built to his spec. The Lincoln also comes with a rugged footswitch that changes the channels and adds boost on the drive channel.

The amp sounds incredibly warm and full with a humbucker-equipped guitar like the Les Paul Custom I used to test it. Channel one is optimized for clean tones, and features volume, treble and bass, reverb 1, and a normal/bright toggle switch. Setting the toggle to normal, the Lincoln delivers snappy cleans with crisp highs. Pushing the volume produces some grit, but the amp solidly maintains single-note clarity while imparting extraordinary roundness to chords. Moving over to a Telecaster and switching the toggle to bright, I found that the Lincoln begins to sparkle with brilliant top-end ring rather than the chime you would expect from the AC model it's based on. The reverb is also remarkable, ranging from subtle hall to splashy surf tones.

Most guitarists are going to dig the harmonically rich crunch found on channel two. On this side, controls for drive, tone, master, reverb 2, and a high/low toggle switch govern the overdriven character this channel pumps out. Turning up the drive and master past noon and setting the toggle to low, the amp delivers thick and chewy overdrive, with well-defined body for chunky rhythms and bluesy leads without sounding boxy. The tone control allows for perfect midrange sculpting depending upon the type of guitar you use. The footswitchable boost is also useful, adding a midrange bump and creamy sustain to single notes without boosting the volume. With the toggle switched to high, the amp kicks into high gain and growls with unbridled force. I don't believe I've encountered this much gain in a Carr amp before, but I unequivocally love it. The reverb is impressive here as well, because at its lower settings it doesn't swallow up your guitar sound but instead gives it natural depth.

To my ears, the amp sounds best when the attenuator is set to its full 18-watt payload, offering superb headroom and clarity, but that's not to say it falters at six watts. If anything, the amp at lower wattage has a warm compression and smoothness that is absolutely charming. No doubt, the Lincoln is a hybrid beast, but considering the amount of refinement in its detailed clean and lead tones, it packs a sonic wallop that's unforgettable. GA

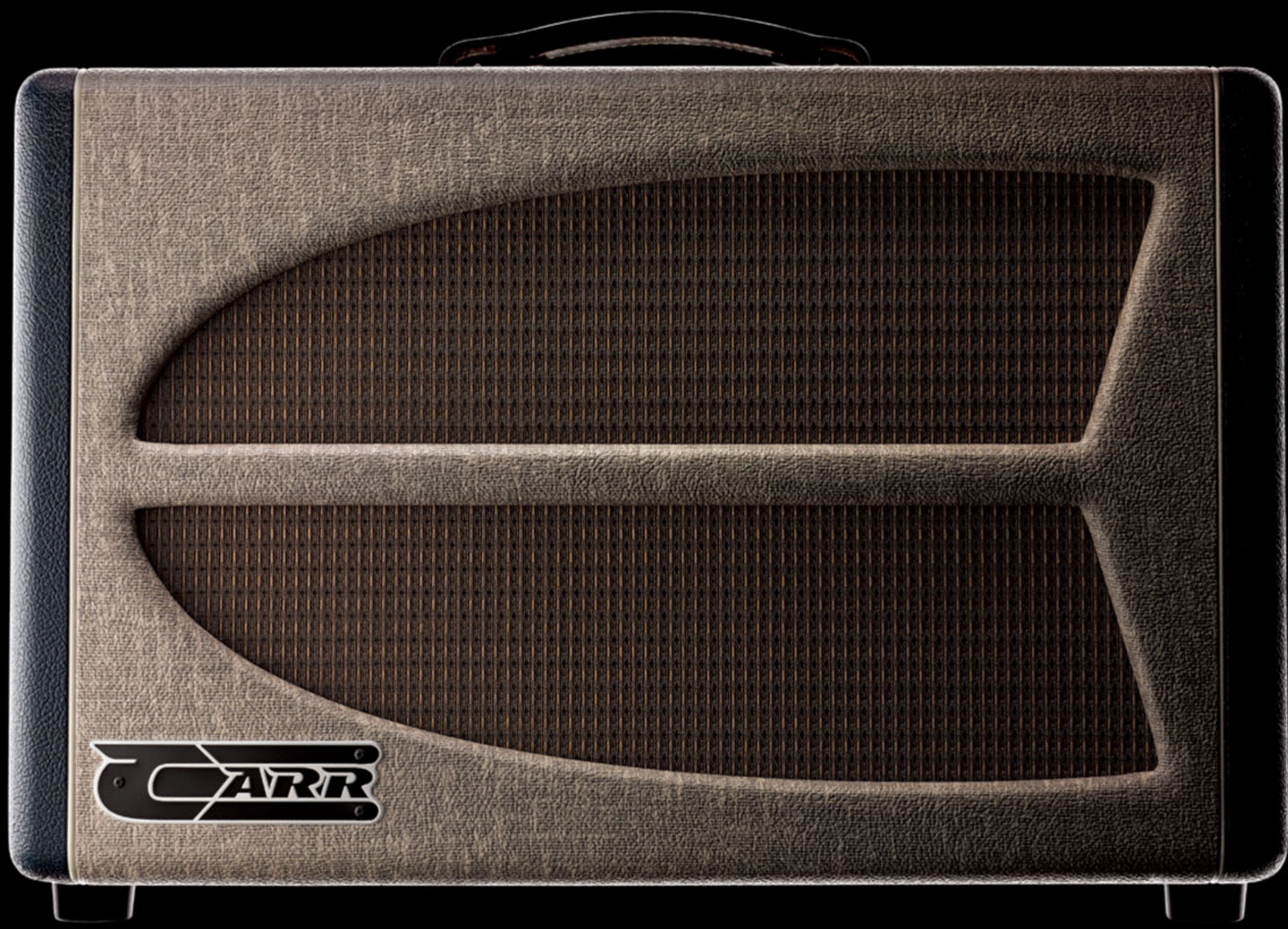
PRICE $2,980.00 as shown in two-tone tolex
Carr, carramps.com

ARTS AND CRAFTS Carr-tography: Steve Carr opens up about his latest combo candidate.

This isn't your first EL84-inspired amplifier. What was the goal for this one?
With the Lincoln, I really studied the early-to-mid-Sixties Vox amps. I bought a 1964 AC10 from a collector in England and mapped out what was so fun about it. I added the Normal/Brite switch that allows you to get the Vox chime and bite (Brite) or a new sound (Normal) that is a blend of blackface Fender and Top Boost, but a bit rounder and fuller. Reverb is one of my favorite effects, so we had to add that! Then I felt that bringing a fully conceived overdrive channel with channel switching to the mix would make the Lincoln a fantastic live machine for almost any musical style.

A lot of your amp designs have attenuation. Do you find most players want this?
Yes. These days so many folks are home players. Even if you gig a lot, the domestic atmosphere is not typically stack friendly. We have had great experience designing transparent and real-feeling attenuators, which have become a Carr signature. I find attenuators super useful at home myself. Necessity is the mother of invention!

Who is the player that will want the Lincoln?
The Lincoln has such a huge range of tones that it really might work for almost anyone, but more importantly it will be as pleasing onstage as it is at home or the studio. This is what modern versatility is all about. The clean tones are so clear and alive, yet they will crunch when turned up. The overdrive can go from just-breaking-up Tom Petty vibes to sustaining hair metal leads. That is a ton of fun! I feel that way, and I hope other guitarists will too.


CARR

Symphony in V Major

2016 Cadillac CTS V-Sport

BY MIKE DALY

RECENTLY, WHILE TESTING Cadillac's latest high-end midsize sedan, the CTS V-Sport, I experienced one of those auditory stream-of-consciousness epiphanies that music die-hards occasionally enjoy. The 13-speaker Bose Centerpoint Surround Sound system had found its way through the XM dial to William DeVaughn's funky down-tempo 1974 R&B classic, "Be Thankful for What You Got." Although the tune imparted to me, "Though you may not drive a great big Cadillac/Diamond in the back, sunroof top/Diggin' the scene with a gangsta lean," I couldn't help but giddily insist that I was doing exactly that.

With an understated exterior, a bevy of hyper-modern interior appointments, and a twin-turbocharged 3.6-liter V-6, the V-Sport feels very gangsta, cruising with supreme luxury and capable bursts of firepower ever at ready. Make no mistake, this isn't the more ballyhooed CTS-V, which packs a full-bore V-8 and debuted to rave reviews a few years ago (particularly in coupe form). Rather, the CTS V-Sport is the highest trim and power specification among the non-V-8 CTS sedans. The CTS's MSRP starts well north of $60,000, and with options our test car came in at just over $71,000, but it made such a good impression that the sticker seemed like a relative bargain.

The V-Sport preserves Cadillac's century-long reputation for the best in American luxury. Outfitted with the Premium Collections trim level (as opposed to the Luxury or Performance Collections), it comes standard with an ultra-smooth magnetic suspension, heads-up display, automatic rain-sensing windshield wipers, illuminating exterior door handles, 20-way electronically adjustable seats, and stitched semi-aniline leather with carbon-fiber or wood trim, among many other niceties. The sheer luxury of the car's user experience is exceptional for such a relatively modest price point.

In terms of performance, the V-Sport's Japanese-built aluminum twin-turbocharged V-6 kicks out 420 horsepower at 5,750 rpm, with 90 percent of its 430 pound-feet of torque available as low as 2,500 rpm.

(left) The California T's angular styling is an attractive evolution from the curvy lines of earlier versions. (above) The roomy 2+2-seat interior and convertible hardtop add comfort and thrills.

The turbos are keenly engineered to exhibit no discernible torque lag (the traditional grist of turbo critics), managing an even power curve reminiscent of the best naturally aspirated engines. Weighing just under two tons, and somehow built to distribute its mass in a dead-even 50:50 front/rear fashion, the V-Sport leaps to 60 mph in 4.4 seconds with an estimated top speed of 172 mph.

Though I never remotely approached such speed, the V-Sport definitely felt like a fast car on the level of the finest sedans from Mercedes, Bentley, or Jaguar. A new eight-speed Hydra-Matic transmission (with its requisite torque-converter technology) delivers shifts in as little as 0.3 seconds, and while it's not exactly a true multi-clutch set-up in the F1-derived European GT mode, it proves plenty capable in this car. An M button on top of the leather-wrapped shifter knob activates a Manual-only mode that's executable via magnesium wheel-mounted paddle shifters. Perhaps in an indication of how often Cadillac expects its average buyer to actually use these paddles, they seem to be positioned a few millimeters further from the wheel than most.

Four drive modes are programmed into the V-Sport's engine, transmission, and suspension settings, with a default Tour mode joined by performance-oriented Sport and Track modes, and the obligatory Snow/Ice mode. It's not entirely clear to me why anyone would want to put a sedan like this on a track, but the magnetic suspension works wonders for keeping the car balanced through hard turns. (As Cadillac's television advertising used to brag, the company pioneered the technology with Ferrari.) And the steering assist and tachometer shift points progressively adjust through the two performance drive modes, giving the sedan a deceptive agility with plenty of power. Further nods to sporting sensibilities manifest in new aluminum 18-inch wheels and standard front Brembo brakes with four pistons and 13.6-inch rotors. Even at speed, and with a not-inconsiderable curb weight, stopping the V-Sport is never an issue.

On the inside, the V-Sport features Cadillac's new CUE information system, which is overtly introduced upon start-up with a digital greeting on the centerpiece eight-inch touch-activated navigation screen. CUE manages all the peripheral interconnective aspects of the car, facilitating Wi-Fi access and wireless charging as well as phone-syncing systems like Apple CarPlay. The theatrical ignition procedure also transforms the main gauge cluster, a blandly inert dark-matted surface when the car is not running, into an all–digital instrument display that is essentially a 12.3-inch computer screen.

Sophisticated and unfettered by theatrics from that point forward, the sharp graphics are intoxicating. The adjustable heads-up display that reflects in the windshield is also a hit, capable of showing speed, rpm, and gear number in one close readout, which allows the driver to constantly remain focused on the road. A large panoramic moonroof lends the cabin airy prestige, while a back-up camera with overhead view imparts the V-Sport's technological equality with brands like BMW.

But the technology may go a bit too far for some tastes with the litany of safety chimes and collision warnings provided by the Driver Awareness package, which sometimes proves to be more alarming than helpful. Case in point, the automatic braking lurched into effect one time while I was parallel parking more quickly than the system liked, and the collision sensors occasionally mistook a parked car sitting at an upcoming bend for one stopped in traffic.

As great as all the bells and whistles may be, any Cadillac's appeal remains rooted in its top-shelf ride quality, and the new V-Sport unquestionably upholds this standard. William DeVaughn was of course correct when he ultimately sang that you don't *need* a Cadillac to "still stand tall." But as the CTS V-Sport impressed upon me, it sure doesn't hurt. GA

MSRP Base $69,955; as tested, $71,545
Cadillac, cadillac.com

Power Player

Eventide H9 Max

BY CHRIS GILL

PHOTOGRAPHY BY MASSIMO GAMMACURTA

I OWN MORE than 400 stomp box effects and love them all, but should I ever have to limit my collection to just one pedal, my choice would be easy: an Eventide H9 Max. Hand's down, the H9 Max is the most powerful and versatile effect pedal on the market today, providing pretty much every effect a guitarist could want except overdrive/distortion (that's what an amp is for, right?). Even better, the processor provides the professional sound quality that Eventide is famous for, packing the power of a full-size rack-mounted effect unit into a compact pedal format.

The H9 Max is identical to the physical hardware of Eventide's H9 Core and H9 pedals, but it ships fully loaded with every H9 algorithm available from Eventide today (currently 48 of them) and in the future, whereas the H9 Core and H9 ship with one and nine algorithms, respectively. While H9 and H9 Core users can download all of the algorithms into their pedals at an average cost of $19.99 each, purchasing an H9 Max will save anyone who wants the entire algorithm collection several hundred dollars.

The H9 Max pedal has an elegant, minimalist design that provides controls for live performance and basic operation tasks, including on/off and tap tempo footswitches, Hotknob, X, Y, Z, and Presets buttons that activate a large jogwheel for dialing in settings, a large LCD, true stereo 1/4-inch input and output jacks, an expression pedal jack, a USB connection, and MIDI In and Out/Thru jacks. Eventide's H9 Control app for iOS devices and Mac OSX or Windows computers handles more sophisticated tasks like programming presets, managing preset libraries, downloading firmware updates, and more via a wireless Bluetooth connection. I particularly enjoy using an iPad to control H9 Control's XY Pad feature, which allows users to select any two parameters in an algorithm and manipulate them simultaneously in real time by moving a finger across the iPad's touchscreen.

The algorithms cover a wide variety of effects, including delays, reverbs, pitch shift/Harmonizer, modulation effects, filters, rotary/vibrato/tremolo, and a dedicated looper with up to 48 seconds of mono recording time. While the H9 Max unit itself stores a maximum of 99 presets, Eventide provides 500 expertly programmed presets in the H9 Control's preset library that offer everything from vintage slapback echo effects to sophisticated, synth-like ambient textures. These presets alone could inspire a lifetime's worth of music, and if you prefer to program your own effects, H9 Control can store plenty more. Although only one algorithm can be used at once, several algorithms feature multiple effects like delays, reverbs, pitch shifting, and/or modulation.

Perhaps what impresses me the most about the H9 Max is how Eventide has managed to distill the world-famous sounds of its H910/949, H3000, and other pro rack effect units into a compact and very easy-to-use pedal. Plugging into an H9 Max instantly transforms a guitar's tone with a professional, studio-quality touch of class that once was available only to players who could spend thousands of dollars for that privilege. GA

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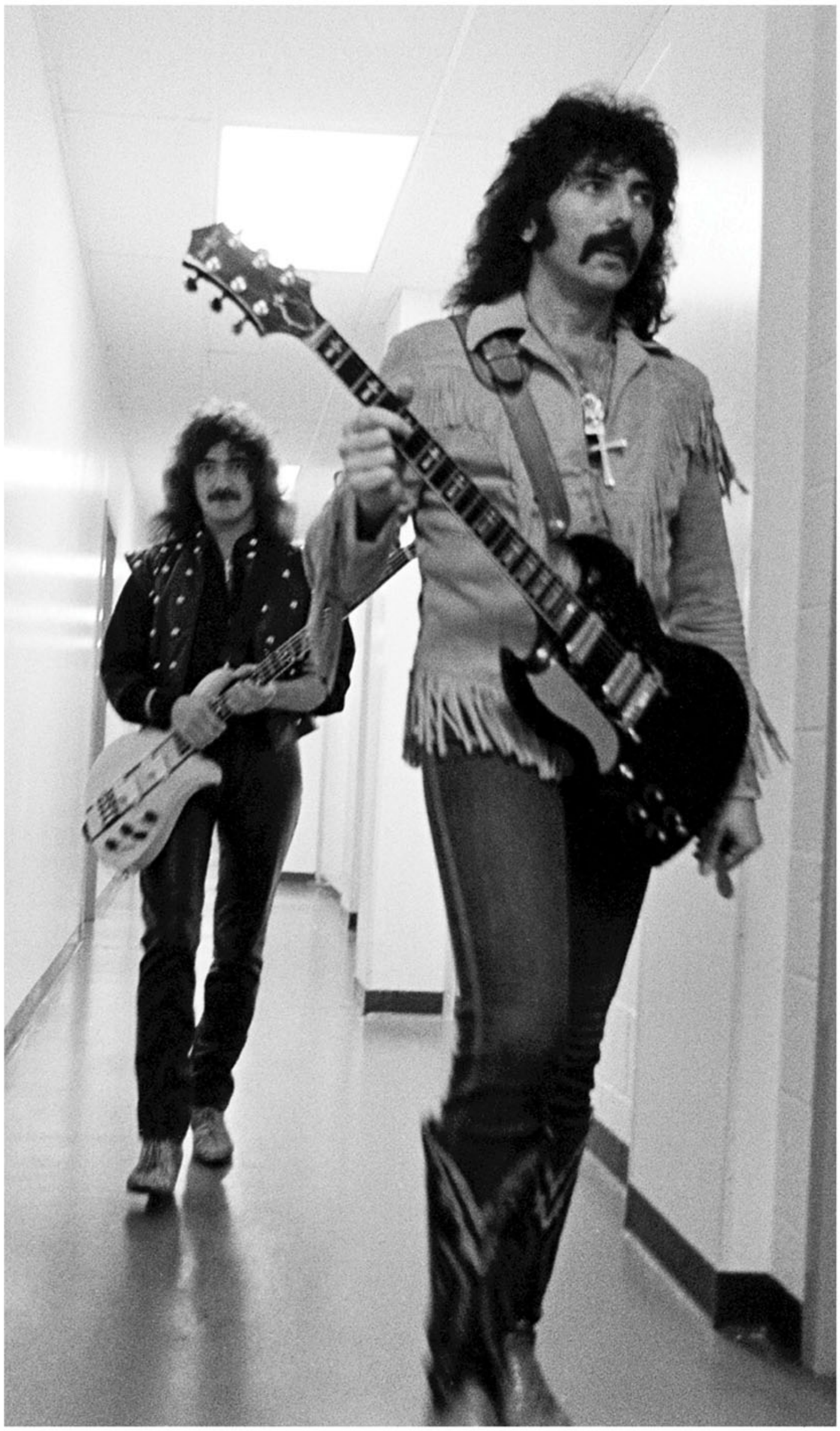

Turn Up the Night

BLACK SABBATH TAKES THE STAGE IN 1982.

PHOTOGRAPHER MARK "WEISSGUY" Weiss (weissguygallery.com) captured this backstage photograph of Black Sabbath's Tony Iommi and Geezer Butler during the *Mob Rules* tour in New Jersey's Brendan Byrne Arena on August 22, 1982. That same year, Sabbath and Ozzy Osbourne, who was enjoying success as a solo artist, were releasing live albums simultaneously, each attempting to claim their legacy by recording their early classics.

In November 1982, Ozzy released the live album *Speak of the Devil*, which was entirely Black Sabbath material from when he was in the band. Sabbath released their *Live Evil* album the following month. "I had a great working relationship with both, but it was like having two girlfriends," Weiss recalls. "You don't tell them about each other."

Although that night's performance was one of Iommi and Butler's last with singer Ronnie James Dio during the Eighties (Dio quit a few months later in 1982 while Sabbath was mixing the *Live Evil* album), Weiss's backstage photos show that the band was getting along quite well at the time. The look of confidence on Iommi and Butler's faces as they swaggered to the stage—wielding a John Birch Custom SG and a B.C. Rich Seagull bass, respectively—reveals a band prepared to blow fans away rather than blow up before their eyes.

"The band gave me unprecedented access and trusted me to take photos of them moments before they go onstage," Weiss says. "I like to be a fly on the wall, so I jumped out in front of them as they walked to the stage. I could hear the crowd chanting, 'Sabbath! Sabbath!' as I was walking backwards in front of them as they held their guitars. Getting the shot required a combination of skill and acrobatics. As the late, great Ronnie James Dio wrote in the lyrics to his song 'Rainbow in the Dark,' 'We're just a picture, we're an image caught in time.'" *–Chris Gill*

Signed, limited-edition prints of this photo—and additional images by Mark Weiss—are available from rockpaperphoto.com.

PHOTOGRAPH BY **MARK WEISS**

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